































THE AUTHOR'S FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE PROMISED LAND

# TRAMPING THROUGH PALESTINE

*Impressions of an American Student  
in Israeland*

By MILTON J. GOELL

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*To My Parents*



*The author takes this occasion to thank Colonel F. H.  
Kisch, of the Palestine Zionist Executive, for his  
many kindnesses to him in the Holy Land*

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## INTRODUCTION

**M**ANY now go to Palestine, Jews and non-Jews, and return with various tales.

Some give themselves over to vivid description, glowing with deep enthusiasm. Others become critical, and upon the experience of a few weeks impose detailed views of how the national home should be built. There are also those who come with prejudice, prepared to see only the difficulties, and to point out the futility of the great enterprise. There are very few who approach the New Palestine with humility.

The author of this volume is unique in that he has prepared a story of his experience unvarnished by preconceptions, with a startling absence of criticism, and lacking, fortunately, in desire to find unlimited fault with what he has seen. He refuses to become the judge of ideal sacrifice and striving. He came to Palestine with eyes fresh for the experience, imbued



## PREFACE

THESE notes—I am aware that this volume contains merely notes—were jotted down while I was tramping through Palestine. As I recorded, day by day, what I saw and how I lived, I had no intention of writing literature. When I scribbled these memoranda from myself to myself I thought that they would be of little interest to book-readers, who wish to be lulled by beautiful descriptions, or to be educated by the revelation of new facts.

I had therefore planned to utilize these notes as material for a book which I would write on my return from Erez Israel. But once back in New York I soon gave up this idea. I convinced myself that if these notes had any genuineness, if they represented the reactions of a young American college man to a visit in the land of his forefathers, they would, if elaborated and retouched, become unreal—they would probably turn out to be a poor

repetition of things that have been said often and much more adequately.

I therefore resolved to leave these pencilled notes in their negligè form, their hair uncombed and their collars awry.

If, perchance, my notes arouse in the heart of some other college youth the desire to come in contact with the soil of our physical and spiritual Homeland—may I then hope that my temerity in publishing these pages in book-form will be forgiven?

M. J. G.

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# TRAMPING THROUGH PALESTINE

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## CHAPTER I.

### MY RETURN TO THE HOMELAND

**A**T last I was on the soil of Jerusalem. Although the calendar indicated only March 17, 1925, the weather was that of a beautiful summer day. An undefinable, ineffably happy feeling pervaded my being. Several days passed before I returned to my usual state. In the meanwhile I merely wandered about; absorbing everything that met my eye, dazzled by the variety and newness of the brilliant colors, by the bright glare of the tropical sun, by the picturesque landscapes and exotic faces.

My eagerness to see more and more of Palestine made me accept an invitation for a whirlwind automobile tour of the country. But after such a trip one is as dizzy as after a six-day bicycle race. One sees without seeing. On the very first day of this trip, therefore,



I determined to travel through the country again, and under more favorable circumstances. Accordingly, one bright spring morning—the morning of April 17—found me, together with a guide, in an automobile bound for Kfar Gileadi in Upper Galilee, where I had arranged to meet an American woman of my acquaintance with whom I was planning to leave thence for a month's horseback tour of Palestine.

As we crossed the floor of the Valley of Jehosaphat and skirted the foot of the Mount of Olives, I saw in the distance a sight which made my heart beat fast. It was the Hebrew University, reposing on the summit of Mount Scopus, its little white Oriental dome sunning itself like a turtle on the sand. The Mount today was deserted—the road winding up its side was empty. Far, far different was that scene from the one of sixteen days before, when Jerusalem, and Scopus, and the Mount of Olives, had swarmed with thousands and thousands of Jewish pilgrims, who, in fulfillment of the prophecies of two thousand years before,

from all parts of the world had hastened back to Palestine to witness in the opening of the Hebrew University the symbol of the final triumphant liberation of the spirit of the Jewish people.

As we hurried on toward Shechem I could not repress a smile at the memory of the last time I had gone over this road. It had been on April 7th, on the evening of which the Samaritans at Shechem, whose Passover fell on the day before the Hebrew festival, had made their Paschal sacrifice on the top of Mount Gerizim. At five o'clock that morning about a hundred and fifty of us had left Jerusalem in three huge motor lorries, first to visit the ancient ruins of Samaria at Sebaste, later to witness the Samaritan Passover on Gerizim.

It was eight o'clock, and night had fallen, when we set out on the return trip from Shechem to Jerusalem. With a roar the lorries started, and we rolled down the slope from Shechem, past the foot of Mount Gerizim on the right, and Jacob's Well, which is also the Well of the Samaritan Woman, on the left.

The calm peacefulness of that dreamy moonlit night among the silent mountains of Judaea acted like opium upon a mind crowded with Biblical images, and before my eyes arose the shadowy figure of Jacob, son of Isaac, heaving the stone from the mouth of the well while Rachel and Laban's men looked on in wonder.

That entire trip back to Jerusalem was like a dream. There was I, perched on the back of a twentieth-century demon, chatting about football and drama with an American friend, occasionally joining him in singing college songs, while I was being borne through the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, over the self-same roads upon which long, long ago the Babylonians, the Greeks, and the Romans had marched to attack Jerusalem; and while the same stars that thousands of years ago had thrown their pale rays on the brother of Esau sleeping upon a stone in the wilderness, now shone down upon me, his descendant riding on a truck.

On the other side of Shechem we ran into

a brief and unexpected shower—a very unusual occurrence for Palestine at this time of the year. Soon the loose dirt of the road became very slippery, so that we had to slow down to the fearfully tedious rate of twelve kilometres an hour. However, at the Arab town of Jenin, where we dipped into the *Emek*, the mud was cut by two smooth tire tracks, and this made our progress easier and faster. Soon we reached Afule, where we lunched at a small Arab restaurant opposite the railroad station. Continuing our journey, on the other side of the *Emek*, at the foot of the mountain upon which lies Nazareth, we struck a good road, entirely free of mud; whereupon the chauffeur immediately increased our speed to the limit, and we were soon in Tiberias.

Here we stopped again, this time to buy sweetmeats for the children of the people to whom we were going. For the guide had told me that in Palestine the settlers' hearts were to be reached, not through their pockets, but through their children. People would be amazed if a guest were to offer them money for

their hospitality, but they were grateful for kindnesses to their little ones.

We went on. At Migdal, some three miles north of Tiberias, an Englishwoman who had come from Jerusalem with us, left the car. A young Englishman—the agent—came out to meet us, and directed us to the house of another Englishwoman, a friend of our fellow-passenger.

As she fell into her countrywoman's arms, our well-dressed companion cried out:

“Why in the world did you bring me to this dirty, filthy, God-forsaken place?”

I hope she did not say this seriously—she was smiling when she spoke—but if she really did, well, it is not proper that I set down here what I should like to say about this woman. Migdal, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, in sight of Capernaum, beneath the heights where long ago the Jews of old waged mighty battles; with its honest, fighting, indomitable settlers of today, is not only not a dirty, filthy, God-forsaken place, but one of the most beautiful and inspiring places in the world.

We left Migdal behind, and soon passed Rosh Pina. Here the road, which had been rough and broad, became more even, but extremely narrow, and winding. We passed several other Jewish colonies, and finally reached a spring which, according to the guide, if not in fact, is one of the three sources of the Jordan.

As we were still some twenty kilometres from Kfar Gileadi when night fell, we increased our speed, serpentining our way along the bulging flanks of the silent mountains of Naphtali.

We passed two or three Bedouin tent encampments, and one or two large and solitary stone buildings, the homes of Arab effendi. But when a group of children belonging to one of the tent villages threw a stone after the car, I felt quite near to New York.

We raced against darkness, and lost out. When we arrived in Kfar Gileadi it was about half-past seven, and almost pitch-dark.

Immediately the car was surrounded by a group of colonists, who poked their heads

under the hood to peer into our faces. The guide, who had formerly been one of them, was welcomed joyously. Encircled by a number of friends, he disappeared into the night; while I was left alone there in the darkness.

After wandering about aimlessly for a while, I followed some men into a brightly illuminated room. It was the dining-room, a simple enough affair: its floors of stone, its plaster walls adorned with six large pictures, its three tables standing near the walls. A powerful lamp hanging from the center of the ceiling gave the room a most excellent illumination.

I sat down on one of the benches beside a table, and leisurely examined my brethren who were now coming into the room as from a different world. Rough-looking men, their flesh brown and tough, their jaws hard and firm, their heads unkempt, their chins and cheeks often covered with hair—though the number of smooth-shaven and bearded men was about equal—their shoulders square and muscular, their chests broad, their clothes the

clothes of the field, they looked like gnarled oaks—like what they really were: men who wrung a livelihood from nature with their bare hands and with the sweat of their brow. But this roughness stopped at their eyes. Their eyes were different—gentle, and kindly, and tender; the eyes of men who think of others before they think of themselves; the eyes of husbands, of brothers, and of fathers.

Now the womenfolk had also come in, and we all sat waiting to be served. I felt rather lonely among these strangers of my own flesh and blood. Nobody spoke to me; my city attire probably repelled them. Or' perhaps they took me for the usual kind of tourist in Palestine—which I fervently hope I was not.

Finally I forced a conversation upon two young fellows beside me. And this was lucky for me, for the few words we exchanged seemed to make them feel more or less responsible for my welfare. One of them piloted me through the meal which was soon served, while the other found my sleeping quarters, and later took me off to my bed.



Supper was a simple affair. We had tea already sugared, slightly sweetened hard, brown cakes, fresh-baked rye bread, and an excellent piece of butter just churned, of a size and quality such as I used to dream of in the restaurants around Harvard Square. That was all.

By this time I was absolutely exhausted—feverishly so. The second of my acquaintances, perceiving this, offered to show me to the place where I was to sleep that night. I staggered off after him, around the back of the house and into a spotlessly clean room measuring about twenty feet by fourteen, its walls of white plaster, and its floor consisting of squares of red stone. The light in this room was miserable, emanating from a most wretched glass kerosene lamp. The furniture comprised merely a small kitchen table and six cots.

After pointing out the bed nearest the door, my guide left.

At first I was too tired to sleep. Finally, however, I fell into a fitful slumber, disturbed

several times by loud noises on the other side of the wall. The chalutzim were holding a meeting in the dining-room, which was separated from my bed by a single thin partition, and there was much shouting and heated discussion. Besides, now and then one of the chalutzim would turn in for the night without being particularly careful as to how he lifted his feet or dropped his boots on the floor.

Finally, when the chalutzim had all gone to bed and everything had become quiet, I was able to snatch a few hours of refreshing sleep.

## CHAPTER II.

### UNDER THE LEDGE OF MT. HERMON

*April 18*

**I**N preparation for the horseback trip I was planning to make, I had bought an outfit of army breeches and puttees. These I donned the next morning. The man who had led me to the sleeping-room the night before was now shaving himself; and when he gave me half of his cup of water, I followed suit. This done, he showed me to the men's wash-room.

On my way to the washroom I had my first opportunity of learning what kind of country I was now in. I found that Kfar Gileadi is situated upon a bulging ledge in the ridge of the mountains of Naphtali, the slope rising abruptly above, and falling as abruptly below it. Almost directly opposite looms the highest portion of Mt. Hermon, sombre, silent, and massive, covered with snow and penetrating

the clouds. Hermon is very long, and gradually merges with the rest of the range of which it is a part.

Between Hermon and Kfar Gileadi lies the valley, very broad and flat, which later becomes the Valley of the Jordan. In this valley the grass is of a vivid green, and very rich.

Far off to the south, and on the other side of the valley, one can see dirty Lake Hule, looking more like a marsh than a lake. Between Hule and Kfar Gileadi are signs of several springs. As a matter of fact, this region has an abundance, perhaps an overabundance, of water. On our way up, the day before, we had passed several springs that were actually going to waste in swamps. This plenty is the source of both a great blessing and a great evil: the district is wonderfully fertile, but, at the same time, full of malaria.

To the north, on the Kfar Gileadi side of the valley, and crowning the top of a steep hill, is Metulah, the northermost Jewish colony in Palestine. It looked to be but five minutes from Kfar Gileadi; the red road made a twist

or two, and was there. But actually Metulah is five kilometres away; and when I walked there the distance seemed ten.

Farther out in the valley, between Metulah and Kfar Gileadi, lies an Arab village the name of which I was unable to learn. Its situation is most unusual—on a very steep hill rising perhaps a hundred feet above the floor of the valley, and crowned by a remarkably flat and regular plateau that seems to have been levelled by human hands. Long ago a walled town must have stood there; and, indeed, the site is still an excellent one for a fortress.

Having washed, I returned to my room to finish dressing. Then I had my breakfast—tea, bread, and cheese. I waited for butter, but none came. I was soon to learn that here one gets butter only on holidays.

Returning to the sleeping quarters, I met one of my room-mates—a man of about twenty-eight, with a fine face—a face intelligent, quiet, and gentle; as it seemed to me, the outward indication of an inner purity. When he learned that I was from New York, he

asked me if I had heard of Rockaway Avenue. I had indeed, for I had been born, and lived many years, within but a few blocks of that street; and I was quite taken aback at hearing this name, so familiar to my ears amongst the old scenes in my own world, up here among these far, far distant mountains of the Bible.

My room-mate told me that his parents lived on Rockaway Avenue. They had parted from him in the old country, fifteen years before. He wanted to visit them, but our immigration law stood in the way. There was little hope for him, and he was very much depressed.

Leaving the house, I went out to explore the colony. About the courtyard, and forming its four sides, stood four large structures, two of which, the barn and the living-house, were the principal buildings of the colony. The living-house, which included a hospital as well as the kitchen and dining and sleeping rooms, faced the barn, the upper story of which also was used as sleeping quarters. To the left, facing the barn, was a cattle shed, and, adjoining it, a blacksmith shop. On the righthand side of

the yard was a composite structure consisting of the laundry, the tool-house, and a new cow barn. Behind the northern end of the house stood the creamery.

All this composed the more important section of the colony, which seemed to be cut by a definite line of demarcation. The lesser part of the colony consisted of four small stone buildings—the school, the nursery, the children's quarters, and an auxiliary dormitory for adults. White and new, spick and span, these buildings represented the suburban section of Kfar Gileadi, so to speak.

In the yard I espied a group of four or five men carrying a soccer ball into the shoe-maker's shop. Following them, I found them preparing to inflate it, and learned that, as today was Saturday and their time therefore their own, they were now going to have a game of football. I had already noticed, south of the schoolhouse, a flat field with goal posts at either end.

At my request they readily consented to let me join them. I therefore trotted off to the

bedroom to change my heavy and unyielding riding clothes for a pair of long but light khaki trousers which I had brought along to wear in case I should give up the horseback trip and decide to make my trip through Palestine on foot.

My clothes changed, I hurried over to the field. There I found the men already at play. The sides being even, I could not get into the game. So I sat down to watch instead. And from time to time I stole a furtive glance over my shoulder at solemn-browed Mount Hermon, which seemed puzzled and shocked to see these strange Israelites of today playing football upon this holy ground of the Bible—this ground over which still hovered the ghosts of their ancestors of two thousand years ago.

Lunch was served at half past twelve—bean mash, chopped raw cabbage, bread, and a very thick bean soup. The bean mash was like clay; but the soup, really good, saved the meal.

The reader may soon weary of my constant recital of my menus. But this matter, of



food was one of the reasons why I wanted to visit the colonists in the way in which I finally did. I wanted to get a true idea of their life; and to get this one must live with them, sleep with them, share their good times with them, and also eat with them. An army, said Napoleon, marches upon its stomach. This applies to all walks of life, and to gain a thorough understanding of a man it is useful to know the fuel that keeps him alive. Here were men filled to the brim with idealism, performing mighty deeds of valor for children yet unborn; and it was not until I had seen how they slept and what they ate, and a dozen other little things which, in themselves, are petty and material, that I could understand how great their idealism and how mighty their deeds of valor really were.

Lunch over, I strolled rather leisurely along the path which leads toward Metulah. This path brings one to the northern end of the ledge on which Kfar Gileadi lies, then, abruptly dipping into the valley below, it joins the main road that leads to Metulah and to

Beirut. Kfar Gileadi itself, situated high up on the mountain side, is somewhat off the main road.

Two boys from Kfar Gileadi who were going on a hike, as they passed me by invited me to join them. I accepted. We kept to the road until it began to make the ascent to Metulah, then, leaving it, turned to the right. We plunged down a ravine, and, following toward its source the stream which flowed at the bottom, had soon reached our destination—a waterfall at the end of the ravine.

Here the water makes a fall of about a hundred feet into a pool hidden behind the final curve of the ravine. The sides of the ravine at this point are steep and inaccessible, the only way to the pool being a ledge, no more than eight inches wide, eaten out of the rock. Below it there is an abrupt drop of about twenty feet, and if one slips one falls into a stream irresistible in its flow, and upon rocks still less inviting. Considering, besides, that the ledge was uneven and slippery, one can

readily see that reaching the pool was by no means devoid of thrills.

Eyeing the ledge rather dubiously, I decided that I would be safer on it in my stockinged feet. Nor was I the only one who thought so, for almost all—we had found a number of colonists on the spot—removed their shoes before attempting to pass over. I felt rather ashamed when I saw one fellow nimbly run across in his hobnailed boots. But he was probably a shepherd, for such a performance required either foolhardiness or feet used to rocks and steep mountain-sides.

We all gathered upon the rocky knob in which the ledge terminates, and looked down upon the pool below. It was a wild spot. The sun did not penetrate there, and it was damp and dusky. Far above us rose the cliff from which the water fell. The cliff top itself seemed to be hanging right over us, so that I almost put forth my hand as if to keep it from falling down upon us.

It was an unpleasant spot, and the pool itself dirty, shallow, and muddy; yet we found

two of the boys bathing there. As we watched and rested, our bodies screened them from the view of the girls in the party.

We did not stay there long. Our aim achieved, we started back for home. Feeling an impulse to return over the ledge in my shoes, I attempted to do so. But I did not get very far. My feet began to slip, and the stream below seemed to sink hundreds and hundreds of feet. I found it impossible to go on. Leaning against the cliff, one hand grasping the rock, I managed with the other to remove my shoes and tie them to my belt. Then, in my stockinged feet, I covered the remainder of the distance in safety.

As we hurried off down the ravine, one of the boys with whom I had come stopped to fix his shoe; and when I waited for him he was very thankful, becoming quite friendly on the way back to Kfar Gileadi.

Returned to my sleeping quarters, I tried to take a nap—a project from which the flies soon dissuaded me. I therefore took to my Hebrew, and, warding off predatory flies with

one hand, soon managed to increase my Hebrew vocabulary by twenty words.

I have neglected to mention the language of the people here. It is the language of the Israelites of old, the language in which God spoke to Abraham and Moses and Samuel—Hebrew, biblical Hebrew. Even two or three years ago more than eleven thousand children in the kindergartens, elementary, and secondary schools of Palestine were receiving their education through the medium of Hebrew. And a language spoken in the streets by children cannot be called dead. Imagine taking Latin from the cloister and the university, and making it the vernacular! Yet this is exactly what the Jews have done with Hebrew. They have brought Hebrew from the synagogue and the seminary, and have made it the language of housewives, of chauffeurs, and of shopkeepers. Babies in their cradles lisp it. That very morning I had heard boys play football in Hebrew. "*Mahayr*" and "*Boh Haynah*," I had heard them shout to one another, and I could hardly believe my ears. When one

plays football, one has no time to dig for words or compose sentences in a language foreign to one's tongue, and if these boys were shouting to and directing one another in Hebrew it was because Hebrew had already become part of them. The manners and life of these boys were different from those of the children of the ancient possessors of this soil. But two things had remained unchanged — gray-headed Mount Hermon, over there across the valley behind me, and the language in which these boys were now playing football.

The use of the Hebrew language will do two things, both of which I believe to be essential to the success of a Jewish nation in Palestine: it will unite us to the Jewish people of old, and to the wonderful history of that people; and it will unite the Jews in Palestine today among themselves. For they cannot become one people, with a common culture and common understanding and sympathy, unless they speak a common language.

And the Jews entering Palestine today know this. Sometimes it happens that a number of

them, forgetting themselves, or yielding to temptation, begin to converse in Yiddish; but suddenly one of them will remember and, interrupting, will say abruptly "*Dahbayr Ivrit*," whereupon the conversation will immediately continue in Hebrew.

\*     \*     \*

That evening I learned of an Arab village in the neighborhood where many of the Arabs speak English. These people had once gone to America to make their fortunes. Many of them had succeeded, and, having become comparatively rich, had returned to Palestine, there to spend the remainder of their days in ease and comfort. I remembered having seen many such Arabs in American summer resorts, where, pack on back or suitcase in hand, they are often met peddling laces and linens.

I was sorry that I had no time to visit these Arabs who, in a corner of the world so far from America, spoke my own language. I should not have been in the least surprised if I had

met among them some of the men who, away back in the Catskill Mountains of New York, a few years before had sold tablecloths and pillow-cases to my mother.



## CHAPTER III.

### EDUCATION IN ISRAELAND

*April 19*

THE next morning I was awakened by the flies. At night they are unnoticeable, but with the coming of the sun they fall upon one like harpies.

After breakfast I made another tour of the colony. Previously I had observed it en masse; now I looked for the fine points, as it were. I noticed some little things that denoted one of two things,—either that the colonists here were prosperous, or else that they were extravagant. There was a duck pond, for instance; and duck ponds made of concrete, even though their diameter measures no more than about twelve feet, cost money. Above it, on a pole rising from the center of the pool, was perched a pretty little bird house; a strange thing—a house for birds in a land where many human beings have no houses.

Then there were rabbit kennels in the barnyard, and a flower garden near the barn. Such unremunerative things exist only where people have money to spare for luxuries, or where, in spite of poverty, an irresistible and innate craving for the pretty and decorative elements of life makes men indulge in things they really cannot afford.

I visited the guide's father, who lived in Kfar Gileadi. In answer to my many questions he told me that the colonists here frequently changed their tasks, the shepherd taking to plowing, the plowman to tending the flock, and so on. This, he explained, gave everyone ample opportunity to acquaint himself with all the various phases of agriculture and everything pertaining thereto; and thus the colonists developed into all-around, self-reliant farmers. There were only a few exceptions to this rule: those who were expert in particular phases of agriculture remained at the same kind of work always, acting as teachers to the rest of the colonists in their particular branch.

Incidentally, women were subject to the

same rules as men. And just as the women were assigned tasks in the field, so the men were given work in the kitchen. It was quite amusing to see one huge fellow—six feet four, without exaggeration; the tallest Jew I have ever seen—with his sleeves rolled up and a woman's apron protecting his clothing, kneading bread.

When I left the guide's father I returned to my room, to read some Thackeray I had brought along. A little after, two boys entered the room, one of them being David, the boy with whom I had walked back from the waterfall the day before. As I lay there on the bed, still holding my book in my hand, I asked these boys innumerable questions, which they answered, until David, noticing the book, asked: "Why are you in here reading now? You can do that in America. Here you ought to be outside all the time." And David embarrassed me, for I felt that he was right.

After the boys had gone, I also went out, this time to visit the school, which is in one of the four small buildings that make up the



CHALUTZIM OF THE FRONTIER COLONIES, UPPER GALILEE



lesser half of the colony. They are laid out so as to form the four corners of an imaginary square whose area is a large, empty flat field, roughly suitable for ballgames. And as I approached I saw that at that moment it was being used precisely for that very purpose. The teacher and about a dozen of his pupils, girls as well as boys, were playing soccer.

The teacher was a fine-looking young fellow, handsome and muscular. But I hope that his teaching was better than his playing, for of all the players on the field he was undoubtedly the clumsiest. Having watched his unwieldy antics for a few moments, I went over and spoke to him. But he, motioning me toward the side of the field, asked me to wait. When they had finished playing, however, he invited me into the schoolhouse with a wave of his hand.

The schoolhouse is divided into two parts; one contains the kindergarten—which I did not visit—while the other includes the classrooms that make up the school proper. These rooms were small affairs—together they would

not have taken up more than a strip in one of our modern New York classrooms. They were furnished with low, oil-cloth-covered tables, instead of desks; and in place of stools they had benches. As in American schools, pictures drawn or painted by the children hung on the walls. In the smaller room was a small closet containing all the textbooks and writing supplies.

On the wall of the main classroom I noticed a row of pigeon-holes. In each of them lay a tooth-brush, while a clean white towel hung under each compartment. Evidently modern hygiene had been introduced even amongst the mountains of Naphtali.

The younger of the children now went into the smaller, while the older ones took their seats in the larger classroom. Quickly fetching their supplies from the closet, the little ones settled down to paint; while the teacher assigned a lesson in composition to his more advanced pupils.

The teacher and I stood watching on the side, and between interruptions from the children

he answered my questions (of which I never ran short in Palestine).

His explanation of his pedagogic duties revealed that he was not only the children's teacher, but a sort of governess to them as well. They were under his care from rising till bed-time, and he ate and played with them in addition to teaching them. And, indeed, I could easily see that the relationship between them was more intimate than that between teacher and pupils. He was actually one of them. True, he was their master; but he ruled through friendship, not discipline.

While I was speaking to the teacher, the doctor had come in and gone off with several of the children. The teacher told me that they were going to have their eyes examined, and I was amazed to see the modernity of these people. Let me observe, by the way, that the schools of the colonies are as up-to-date as the finest of our schools in America today; and that, furthermore, the methods which the colonists have adopted are the cream of those developed in all the highly civilized countries



of the world. The people who are building this country may be backwoodsmen, but they are backwoodsmen with an ideal.

This matter of education is one of the glories of modern Palestine. Here are ninety colonies scattered all over the land, yet there is not one settlement where children must do without instruction for want of educational facilities. The new Jewish nation must, it is true, to a great extent be a nation of peasants—but where is it written that peasants must be boors? Education will make better manual workers of them; for in the schools they suck the milk of idealism, and learn to know why they must work, and must continue to work, with their hands as they are doing. And the fact that education is within the reach of every Jewish child in the land is not insignificant. Though Palestine is a small country, it is big enough not to be swamped by nine times ninety colonies, and these colonies are often hours apart. Yet schools and other educational facilities have been so located that every spot, no matter how small or remote, either has its

own school or else is near a town or colony where children may go to their neighbors' schools for instruction.

And greater glory still is the fact that these schools for the Jews are supported by the Jews alone. A half-million dollars a year goes into the Jewish schools of Palestine, and practically every bit of that money comes from Jewish pockets.

My conversation with the teacher came to an end when two of the tiniest pupils tiptoed up to him and whispered in his ear. Taking one by each hand, and asking me to wait, he went off.

I waited for a while; but as he did not return very soon, I left the classroom. Outside, two or three of the boys were still playing football. I joined them. My first kick at the ball was rather skillful—pure luck—and one of the children evinced great surprise that a foreigner should be able to play football.

After lunch, the American woman with whom I was expecting to tour the country having arrived, the guide outlined our pro-

posed trip to us. Our first four days, he told us, were to be spent in visiting the ancient ruins in the neighborhood. This was enough for me. I was to leave Palestine in five weeks, and in that short time I wanted to see people, not ruins. I therefore began to doubt the wisdom of going on this trip after all.

\*     \*     \*

Supper over, I went on a milking trip to the barn with one of the two boys who had been so kind to me on my first night in Kfar Gileadi. It was muddy and pitch dark outside, so that my friend had to lead me across the barnyard by the arm, telling me, all the while, a remarkable story about cows with ten teats.

It had been pitch dark outside, but in the barn it was even darker, if that was possible; and our feeble lamp did not help matters much. There was little to see, and still less to do. I asked my friend to let me help him with the milking, but he told me that he was saving the last cow for me. When I learned that he would not be ready for the last cow for another forty-five minutes, I returned to the house, tell-

ing my companion that I would be back later.

In the house they were holding a meeting of the kind that had been going on during my first evening in Kfar Gileadi. At these meetings, where women enjoy the same powers and privileges as men, the various business of the *kvutzah* is discussed.

Returning to the barn at the proper time, and with the utmost care, I arrived there without any mishaps more serious than that of stumbling over a wooden fence that enclosed a faucet rising from the ground in the middle of the yard.

I sat down to milk, and flushed with embarrassment when I found that I could not make the milk come. I continued my efforts valiantly, however, and succeeded at last. My fingers seemed ready to fall off before I was through—but I finished my task manfully.

The milking over, we carried the milk to the creamery. This was a tiny room lined with shelves upon which were neatly arranged scores of white cheeses shaped like round loaves of bread, and most appetizing in appear-

ance. They were different from the kind of cheese—a sort of caked curd—with which we had been served in the dining-room. These cheeses were of a better quality, and were marketed, my friend told me, in Beirut, Tiberias, and Sidon. When I tasted one, I felt that it would have found a market in New York, too. Made of goat's milk, hard, dry, and very salty, it was delicious.

■

## CHAPTER IV.

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE HIKE.

*April 20*

**I** DECIDED to hike through Palestine after all.

Those things which I did not need or could not take on my trip I packed into my valise. (This I intended to send on to Tiberias or Rosh Pina with someone who would be going southward; and at those places I planned to get someone who would carry it farther still, and so on until Jerusalem.) Into my knapsack I packed, besides the usual essential articles of apparel, drug articles, films, notebooks, stationery, pamphlets, maps, and my Thackeray. In addition to these things I was taking along canteen, camera, sweatshirt, and overcoat.

I was now fully equipped for a month.

Learning that a wagon was leaving for Rosh Pina that afternoon at two o'clock, I asked to

be taken along as far as Yessod Hama'ala. I was accepted.

But that was still more than four hours off, and I had not yet visited the neighboring colonies of Tel Hai or Metulah. I therefore asked my friend David to point out to me the way to the nearer settlement. He walked with me to the southern crest of the shelf, and there, at the foot of the hill upon which Kfar Gileadi lies, I saw the first-mentioned place.

It was a colony even tinier than Kfar Gileadi. There were five or six houses of the same type as the smaller ones of the latter colony. Farther down the slope, about five hundred feet from the houses, stood the barn and sheds, and other buildings there were none.

Due to its lower altitude Tel Hai was not so healthful a place as Kfar Gileadi. Nor was its strategic position so good. It would have been safe and easy to fire upon it from the top of the hills which towered high above it.

Near the edge of the hill from which we were looking down upon Tel Hai was a little

cemetery, with perhaps ten graves. Here, David told me, were buried those men and women who three years before had fallen in a native attack upon Kfar Gileadi and Tel Hai. It was their pictures that I had seen hanging in the dining-room in Kfar Gileadi, and which I was soon to see hanging in every village in Palestine.

The leader of the Jews in this fight had been Captain Trumpeldor, a man whose history reads like the life of Judas Maccabaeus. He is now the hero of the new Jewish era in Palestine; the people there simply worship him. Even already legends have gathered about him, and, although only three years have passed since his death, he has by now become almost a biblical figure.

It was now being planned to erect a monument here to the memory of this man. There was one marble monument in the graveyard already—a surprising sight for this frontier and pioneer country. But there was plenty of marble on the mountain behind Kfar Gileadi, and the monument had been made by one of



the men who lived here. It was the work, David told me, of one of the colonists, in memory of his wife. Even in this remote spot love and sorrow had found a way of doing honor to their dead.

After viewing the cemetery I asked David whether he would go with me to Metulah. As he was free for the afternoon, we went off together.

On the way we passed two Arabs sitting by the roadside. We stopped, and David spoke to them in Arabic. They smiled, and offered us some of their queer, putty-colored bread—another incident to show that relations between Arab and Jew here are not what some people who never were in Palestine would have us believe them to be.

Arrived in Metulah, we went immediately into the nearest store. There we bought some food, which we ate at one of the tables outside. David, for whom sardines were a rare luxury, speedily finished a can of them; but a half hour later he congratulated me for not having touched any. I restricted myself to the olives,

which were good to eat, but very small and unattractive. They probably send their large olives abroad.

Knowing that I wanted to purchase a revolver, David took me to an acquaintance of his. He was a likeable fellow, but it was impossible to do business with him. He had a seven-shot Browning automatic for which he wanted three pounds, although it was old and worn, and as he would not reduce his price, we had to leave without it. But soon I was sorry I had not taken it at any cost, for revolvers were hard to find in this country where owning one without a license meant six months in prison. And here was I, about to start out alone on a hike through a land where I had, for no good reason, been led to expect that the natives were dangerous.

An inspection tour of Metulah revealed that it consists of one street with about twenty houses on each side. I passed two stores there, and was told that still another exists. There is a little hotel, spotlessly clean—as, indeed, all of the town seems to be. It is, in fact, one

of the most attractive settlements in Palestine. At the northern end, towards the west, are soldiers' barracks. Opposite stands the customs buildings; for Metulah is on the Syrian border. As it lies high up on the top of a hill, the location is extremely healthful. And it is no less finely situated from a scenic point of view, for thence one can see practically the whole of beautiful Upper Galilee.

This was one of Baron Rothschild's colonies; and, as in almost all Rothschild colonies, a good many Arabs were in evidence. I saw one withered old fellow in dirty skirts pushing about a Hebrew child in one of those small toy automobiles so common on our New York City sidewalks. He seemed to be enjoying himself hugely, frisking, smiling, and clapping his hands as if it were his own child with whom he was romping.

On our way back to Kfar Gileadi we met a man on horseback. David knew him well, and we engaged in an intimate conversation with him. When he learned that I intended to make a trip through Palestine on foot, he sug-

gested that the two of us—David and myself—make the trip together. He said that such a trip would cost almost nothing—implying that I would pay David's expenses—and enumerated a long list of advantages which I would derive from having David with me. Then he rode on.

Assuring me of his eagerness to go, David told me that he had intended to leave Kfar Gileadi shortly anyway; he had gone there to work only for a year, and his time would be up in three weeks. On his repeated assurances that I would not be taking him from his work, I finally consented to take him along.

We arrived in Kfar Gileadi after two o'clock, and the wagon which had been supposed to take me to Yessod Hamma'ala had already left. This troubled me very little, however, for I was practically sure of having company on the morrow, when David would probably be leaving Kfar Gileadi with me.

In accordance with the local custom, I had bought several packages of cigarettes in Metulah to distribute among the men of Kfar

Gileadi. For in these remote frontier towns, where the people, besides, are none too rich, cigarettes are a great luxury, and the men are almost beside themselves with joy at the sight of them.

Having distributed one package in the kitchen of Kfar Gileadi, I set off for Tel Hai with another in my pocket. Passing the cemetery, I dipped into the valley, taking the narrow road that twists its way downward along the side of the slope into the colony below.

Arrived in Tel Hai, I immediately located the dining-room. There I found a number of men gathered about one of the tables. I sat down amongst them, put my box of cigarettes on the table, and joined in the conversation.

As it was quite late, supper was soon served. I was delighted to see hot rice with *milk*—I had not had milk in days. The rest of the meal, however, consisted of horrible half-raw rolls filled with sour and clotted cheese. Their after-effects were even worse than their taste; but on cheese rolls like these the chalutzim work twelve hours a day.

When I came back to Kfar Gileadi, David told me that he had decided to accompany me. Thereupon we sat down to make our arrangements. As I would be setting out the next day, while David would be unable to leave Kfar Gileadi until the day after, we arranged to travel separately until Rosh Pina. Meanwhile, having started out a day ahead, I should have time to visit the colonies lying between Kfar Gileadi and Rosh Pina. We would meet in the latter place on Wednesday evening, at Feldman's Hotel (whither I had sent my valise that morning).

Our arrangements concluded, we went back to Tel Hai to find out about a wagon which, as we had heard, was to go south from there the following morning. We learned that at 5 A.M. a wagon would indeed be leaving, but that it would cover only half the distance to Yessod Hama'ala. I was not in a position to choose, however, and when I learned that there would be room for me, I immediately decided to go along.

On our return to Kfar Gileadi David told me

that he would have the sentinel—the rural settlements are guarded at night by sentinels—wake me at four o'clock in the morning.

I packed my knapsack, and went to bed at nine.

## CHAPTER V.

### TOURING THE COUNTRY ON FOOT

*April 21*

I DID not sleep very well. A slight rash had broken out on my body, and whenever the coarse blanket touched my bare skin I was up with a start. Yet, at four o'clock, it took the sentinel half an hour to get me out of bed. The weather was cold, raw, and foggy, and I began to think it would be foolish for me to go parading through Palestine at so unearthly a time of the day. Suddenly realizing, however, that if I wanted to see Palestine I had better not loiter in Kfar Gileadi any longer, I shook off my drowsiness and leaped from the bed. I had only a quarter of an hour in which to catch my wagon, and if I missed it there loomed before me a walk of over fifteen lonely miles (the distance between Kfar Gileadi and Yessod Hama'ala, the next colony). I therefore hurried into my clothes, thrust my few



unpacked things into my knapsack, ran into the kitchen, shook hands with the group of men and women already assembled there, and rushed off for Tel Hai.

When I reached the brink of the hill which overhangs Tel Hai, I saw two men in a wagon just leaving the barnyard. Hoping to head them off, I sprinted down the hillside and took a shortcut to the road. But the men won the race, passing me only two hundred feet away. I shouted to them, but in vain, and they continued on their way at a gallop.

Rather crestfallen, I stopped to consider my next move. Yessod Hama'ala was a six-hours' walk away, and I was not at all well, having been ill when I had left Jerusalem. I felt, however, that I could not return to Kfar Gileadi; the people there would take no money for their kindness, and I had already been living at their expense for three days. So I decided to go to Metulah, for it was quite possible that there I might find a car going my way. Besides, as I surveyed the lonely stretches of Upper Galilee that morning, I realized more than ever the

maintains four large and absolutely modern hospitals—one in Jerusalem, one in Haifa, one in Tel Aviv, and a fourth in Safed. I intended to visit this fourth now; I had been in it during my previous visit to Safed, but only for a moment, and I now wanted to see it thoroughly.

I went there not long after our arrival in Safed, and the nurse with whom we had come up showed me through the entire hospital from top to bottom, so that I saw every room in the place. It was spotless—floors like mirrors, rooms high, airy, and sunny—a hospital that was the *ne plus ultra* in modernity. This in a city which had, long ago, been the retreat of the Hebrew mystics, and where today, but two hundred feet away, Oriental filth and dinginess still held sway as they did two thousand years ago.

My visit to the *Hadassah* concluded, David and I at once set out for Ein Zeitim. This colony is about three-quarters of a mile from Safed, but very hard of approach. A guide took us on a short cut, straight down a huge, cliff-like hill. It was an exhausting descent—

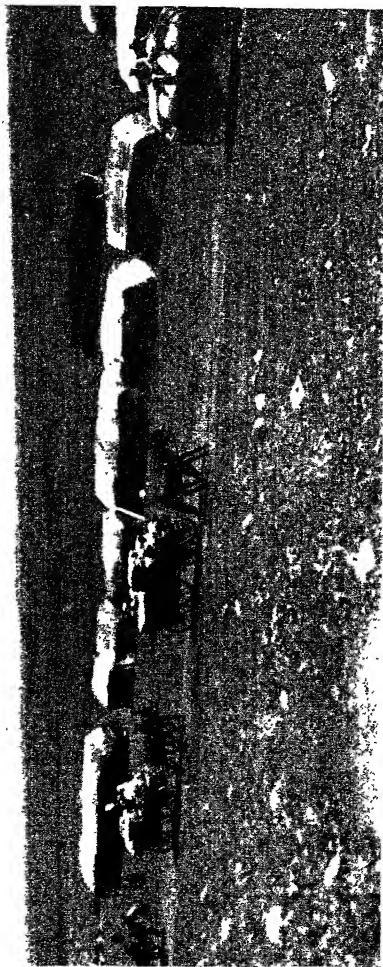
hurried over to the owner's house, and this time hastily struck a satisfactory bargain.

When I returned to the street, two of the wagons were already under way. I hurried after them, but found no room for me. One by one the other wagons filed by, until I thought that I should have to walk to Yessod Hama'ala after all.

Two wagons still remained. A woman was begging the driver of the first of these to take her along. But he refused, saying that he already had a passenger. A moment later I learned, to my surprise and delight, that this passenger was myself. Unceremoniously and ungallantly, I boarded the wagon, and off we went.

The wagon was loaded high, the bales being lashed on with thick ropes. One of them served as the driver's seat—a rather slippery and precarious one. Between this bale and the sloping side of the wagon was a narrow, wedgelike space—and this, alas, was my seat.

At Tel Hai we were boarded by a party of about seven. The wagons were overloaded al-



TOBACCO TRAIN IN UPPER GALILEE. ARAB TENT VILLAGE IN THE BACKGROUND. MT. HERMAN IN THE DISTANCE.



ready, but somehow or other places were found for the newcomers. In our wagon a girl sat down beside the driver in a place where I had but a moment before thought it impossible to sit. And it would indeed have been impossible on the stretch of road we had just left. But here she managed to keep on by maintaining a firm grasp upon the driver's arm.

We drove along very slowly, of course—at the rate of about three miles an hour. But the time passed pleasantly. The day was beautiful. Sombre and mysterious, the mountains of Naphtali slid silently by. And in spite of my uncomfortable position I dreamed happy dreams. At times I felt that I was in a different century — among the miners of '49 crossing the hills and prairies of western America in search of happiness and a new world on the other side of the Rockies. So similar, indeed, was this journey of mine in Upper Galilee to the journeys of the pioneers of American history, that I should not have been surprised at any moment to see Indians come swooping down upon us from the

mountains of Naphtali above, or herds of bison go thundering by in the distant valley of the Jordan below.

At twelve we stopped for lunch. Finding that I had an hour's time at my disposal, I climbed the cliff above us to explore a low cave which I had espied. Everything there indicated that it was now a sheltering place for goats; but who knows?—in the days of the Bible it might have housed a prophet.

After about five hours of traveling directly south, we finally turned off to the east, toward Yessod Hama'ala. At that point our driver, who had been left almost at the end of the line, feeling himself called upon to make a last desperate attempt to gain the head of the column, suddenly lashed up his horses. Away we went. The others, seeing themselves being passed, immediately gave chase. We went fast, but they went faster, and soon were ahead again. Just then the road made a dip and curved sharply to the right; and there our driver, in a last game attempt to reach the front, abruptly turned off the road and took a short cut

downhill across country. As we tore along the wagon hurtled and jolted over the rocks till I thought it would fall to pieces. Like John Gilpin, I held on for dear life. Straight for the wagons which had kept to the road we headed, and it seemed inevitable that we should crash right into them at the point where we would enter the road again. But just as we seemed to be upon them, the driver, tugging mightily at his reins, managed to swing his horses to the right, and our opponents flew by us within inches.

We had lost the race, but not our lives, as I had expected. And meanwhile I had had the pleasure of imagining myself out west sixty years ago in a stage coach pursued by the Indians.

About half a mile from Yessod Hama'ala, and a quarter of a mile off the road, is a large farmhouse—one of the largest I have seen in Palestine. As we came opposite it, a woman on our wagon began to wave and call to some men who were moving about in its vicinity. She told me that this farm belonged to her



brothers. Having planned to leave the wagon at Yessod Hama'ala anyway, I decided that this was as good a place to get off as any; I wanted to see that farm. So I told the woman that I would be descending here, and asked her if she had any message for her family. She sent her regards, and also gave me a little vial, apparently containing a medicine, for them.

I shook hands with the driver, and left for the farm. There an old man met me. I greeted him in Hebrew, but he answered me in Russian. He indicated by signs that this was the only language he understood—a most remarkable phenomenon in a land where practically everyone knows Yiddish if he cannot speak Hebrew.

The old man called over one of his sons, to whom the vial served as a letter of introduction.

When the latter caught sight of my camera, however, he became very much excited. Eagerly he asked me whether I would take a picture, and when I agreed he began to hop madly about, hurrying hither and yon in

search of his relatives. Finally he managed to muster them all and line them up before me. He drew up a hay mower to form the foreground of the picture, and seeing that one of the teeth was missing, hastily and unsuccessfully tried to set it in place.

I told them to get ready. They threw their heads back, stiffened up like ramrods—and I snapped them.

At my request one of the men showed me around the farm. Most interesting of all was their method of obtaining water here. It was raised from a well nearby, and poured into a pool adjoining, by means of the rotations of a donkey which constantly moved about the well in a circle.

The family had been on this farm fifteen years, and owned six hundred fertile dunams; it would have been a Paradise, they told me, had they not suffered so much from malaria. I could easily see that this was a malarious region, for there was too much water in the vicinity.

After a light lunch I walked over to Yessod

## TRAMPING THROUGH PALESTINE

be dark. I therefore had to leave Yessod Hama'ala at once, for I wished to spend the night at the colony of Ayeleth Hashachar, still about three miles away.

Accompanying me to a turn of the road, young Barshach showed me my way and left me.

Night fell rapidly, and it was dark when I came to an Arab village. Immediately a fearful howling arose, and a half-dozen dogs came rushing out upon me. Club in one hand, revolver in the other, I passed through that village like a phantom. But, had not an Arab called the dogs off, I might not have passed so rapidly after all.

Somewhat puzzled by a sudden fork in the road, and unable to see my way, I decided to follow that branch of the road which led around and up the side of a hill which now rose before me. For I surmised, correctly, that for strategic and salutary reasons a hill would be the proper location for any settlement in the vicinity.

It was not long before I was passing through

The boy's father, a pleasant little man of about sixty, told me he had come to Palestine some thirty-six years before; he was a real pioneer.

I photographed him, his son, a grandson, and the grandson's donkey; then I went off with the son to take a picture of Yessod Hama'ala from a nearby hillock. Finally we crossed the road to visit the Arab tent village opposite Yessod Hama'ala. The Arabs here, young Barshach (my guide) told me, worked for the villagers of Yessod Hama'ala, and quite naturally were on most friendly terms with their Jewish neighbors across the road.

We entered one of the tents. It was made of straw matting, but was rainproof nonetheless, Barshach told me; and the first whiff of the air within convinced me that it was airproof also. The floor was of clay, but so worn that at first I thought it concrete. A fire was burning at the entrance, and it was horribly hot inside. Heaped up at the end of the tent lay a pile of sleeping mats. The place was not untidy.

By this time it was after five, and would soon

be dark. I therefore had to leave Yessod Hama'ala at once, for I wished to spend the night at the colony of Ayeleth Hashachar, still about three miles away.

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It was not long before I was passing through

an orchard, and a moment later I could see lights.

Near the stable I found a man and woman who directed me to the dining room.

One of my neighbors at the table was an Arab who, it seemed, had also been overtaken by darkness.

My neighbors and I soon became quite friendly. When they learned I was from America, I was assaulted with a hundred questions.

Supper over, the colonists began singing, while I wrote up my journal for the day.

By the time I had finished, the pioneers had begun to file off to bed. When almost all of them had gone, I began to wonder where I should sleep that night. Finally a girl by the name of Deborah noticed me, and learning that no provision had been made for me, immediately took the matter upon herself. She discovered a vacant bed, and had one of the men take me thither.

## CHAPTER VI.

### PALESTINIAN HOSPITALITY

*April 22*

**A** LITTLE before five I awoke—to hear my neighbor in the next cot groaning that he had overslept!

In the dining-room I met Deborah, all ready for work in her tight-fitting blouse and bloomers, with arms and legs bare. The dining-room was almost empty, for the colonists had long ago gone off to the fields, where breakfast would be brought to them later.

That morning it was Deborah's task to bring the workers their breakfast. I accompanied her, walking beside her as she rode a mule.

From each side of the mule a sort of shelf or box was suspended, one being filled with bread, the other containing a pail of cocoa. I carried some more cocoa in a kettle, and when the pail on the mule began to spill, I was obliged to carry that also. We had more than

a mile and a half to go to the field where the colonists were working, and so by the time we got there my arms were almost out of their sockets and the legs of my trousers wringing wet with cocoa.

The colonists greeted us joyfully. Gathering about us, they quickly relieved us of our burden and noisily settled down on the ground to have their breakfast.

When they had finished, they returned to their work of plucking and piling up by hand a bean-like plant, of which acres and acres in the vicinity were waiting to be plucked. Doing it in this fashion would probably take many days. But it had been a dry season, the plants were too sparse and low for the reaping machine, and this, accordingly, was the only method they could use for harvesting the crop this year.

As I had to reach Rosh Pina that night, I soon started back for the colony. Deborah having remained in the fields, I now rode the mule which she herself had before ridden.

The next stop on my itinerary was Mishmar



Hajarden, about four miles south-east of Ayeleth Hashachar. Cutting directly across country in the latter direction, I reached Mishmar Hajarden in about an hour.

The place seemed deserted, almost the only person in sight being an old man sitting on the stoop before his house. From him I learned only that the town hall, the clinic, and the synagogue were all in the same building, but that the schoolhouse stood alone at the foot of the street. Walking there, I found that Mishmar Hajarden lies on the edge of a ravine at the bottom of which flows the Jordan. At this point the Jordan was spanned by a small bridge, and adjoining it was a little building flying the Union Jack; for here the opposite bank is Syria.

Leaving Mishmar Hajarden, I went off in a southwesterly direction toward Machnayim, four and a half miles away. After some time I came in sight of a cluster of stone houses set about a half mile back from the road on the other side of a deep gully.

Thinking I had reached Machnavim. I went



CHALUTZOTH IN AYELETH HASHACHOR—DEBORAH ON THE RIGHT



there. But I found only Arabs in the village; evidently I had come to the wrong place.

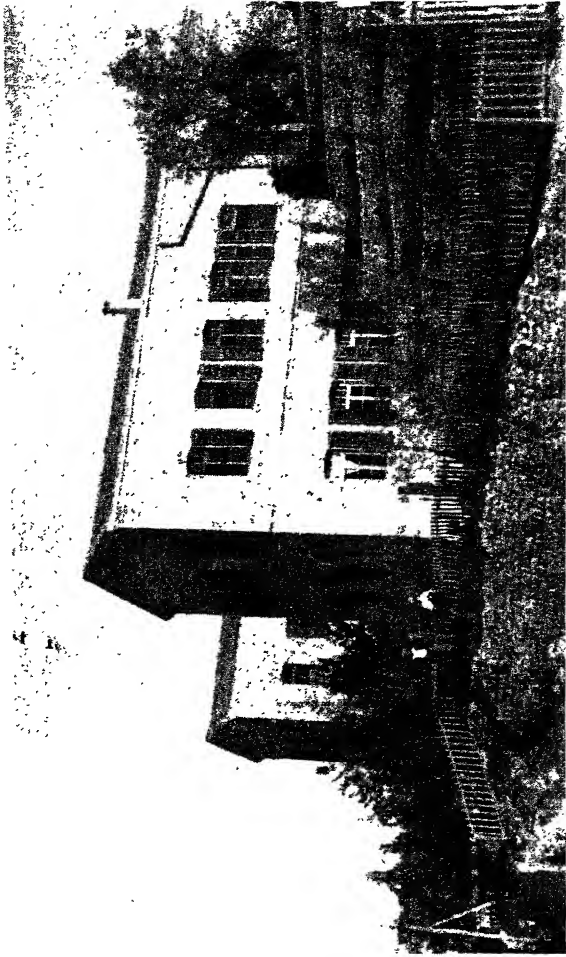
I spoke Hebrew and made signs to the group of Arabs who came forth to meet me, but they understood neither language. Grinning broadly, they answered me in Arabic, while I, also grinning, tried to explain in Hebrew that I knew no Arabic.

In the group was a woman with a baby at her breast. She came up to me, and, to my amazement, started to pluck at my coat and sweat-shirt, which hung over my shoulder. I did not understand what she was doing until she asked for baksheesh; she was begging either for money or part of my outfit. But one of the men, having the instinct, if not the appearance, of a host and gentleman, spoke to her sharply, and she immediately desisted.

I continued on my way, and about a mile down the road came to Machnayim. It is set in a grove of fine large trees, and to one who looks at it from the top of the slope at whose foot it lies, it makes a beautiful impression—an oasis in a desert of grass and grain. Seen

low—a splash of indigo blue. Beyond the Sea lies the grim Valley of the Jordan, overhung by the shaggy and threatening Mountains of Moab. On the northwestern shore of the lake lies Capernaum; and one who knows his Bible can see here much more than is to be seen with the eye. So beautiful is the view physically that it takes one's breath away; but one who knows its spiritual significance—the mighty human forces that emanated from the region below—becomes as one entranced at sight of it.

In the machine with us was a *Hadassah* nurse. She was just returning, from a field trip, to the *Hadassah* hospital in Safed. The *Hadassah* is that Zionist organization in Palestine which takes care of the health of the people—of the Arabs as well as the Jews. It is maintained and supported by the Jewish women of America, and constitutes perhaps the finest cause ever supported by any women anywhere. The *Hadassah* has pharmacies and clinics, keeps doctors in every corner of Palestine, supports milk stations for children, and



HADASSAH HOSPITAL IN SAFED



maintains four large and absolutely modern hospitals—one in Jerusalem, one in Haifa, one in Tel Aviv, and a fourth in Safed. I intended to visit this fourth now; I had been in it during my previous visit to Safed, but only for a moment, and I now wanted to see it thoroughly.

I went there not long after our arrival in Safed, and the nurse with whom we had come up showed me through the entire hospital from top to bottom, so that I saw every room in the place. It was spotless—floors like mirrors, rooms high, airy, and sunny—a hospital that was the *ne plus ultra* in modernity. This in a city which had, long ago, been the retreat of the Hebrew mystics, and where today, but two hundred feet away, Oriental filth and dinginess still held sway as they did two thousand years ago.

My visit to the *Hadassah* concluded, David and I at once set out for Ein Zeitim. This colony is about three-quarters of a mile from Safed, but very hard of approach. A guide took us on a short cut, straight down a huge, cliff-like hill. It was an exhausting descent—



almost a drop, and later, on our return, we found the ascent to be actually easier.

Arrived at the bottom, we turned to the right. We soon came to an Arab village, built on a hill. Here, penetrating this hill we discovered a low tunnel whence flowed a clear and rapid stream of water—the village water supply. And we saw Arab women come to the stream and fetch water in the large clay vases that were in use when Jacob met Rachel at Laban's well and watered Laban's sheep.

As we continued on our way, we saw the tomb of Rabbi Simon bar Yochai in the distance; and my mind once more became astir with those strange old images which were the everyday sights of the Hebrews of thousands of years ago.

Finally, skirting a hill, we came upon Ein Zeitim. But there was nothing to see: it is the most wretched colony I have visited in Palestine. It has one more or less uneven row of houses built on the side of the hill; and of the seven or eight houses there, one or two were untenanted. All of them were mere heaps of

stones. Near the houses was a filthy barn or two.

Below the village a group of men from Ein Zeitim were mixing concrete. They were employed by the British government, which was building a direct and much-needed road from Safed to Acre on the coast. It would pass directly along the edge of their settlement. Until now there had been no road from Safed to Ein Zeitim, and in the many years that they had lived here these colonists had had to carry their produce and goods to and from Safed on donkeys, horses, camels, or on foot.

After inspecting one of the houses—drab and poverty-stricken, and not of the usual spotlessness—we climbed the cliff-like hill back to Safed. There we parted from our guide and went on to Rosh Pina. Crossing the road at the top of the hill, we followed a path which we found there, and soon came to the head of the ravine at whose foot lies Rosh Pina. By approaching Rosh Pina through this ravine, instead of following the corkscrew-like road that winds down the mountain, one goes as the

crow flies, and saves many miles of walking. It is an excellent short cut, known only to an initiated few, of whom David, a true Palestinian, was one.

As we descended the ravine, it became dark. The path, covered with loose stones the size of one's fist, was a treacherous one—evidently intended for goats and donkeys, not men.

Half-way down, being now in one of the most secluded spots of Palestine, I decided to test my revolver; as yet I had found no opportunity of doing so. A trial shot satisfied me; I returned the gun to my holster, and went on.

At the upper end of Rosh Pina, where the Arab quarter of the town is located, we passed a young Arab going in the opposite direction. As we went by him David told me that here the Arabs speak Hebrew as well as Arabic. The Arab, hearing this, turned around and called to us: "Yes, here in Rosh Pina the Arabs speak Hebrew, and the Hebrews Arabic. *Poh ain milchomah bayn haaravim ouvayn hayehudim!* Here there is no war between the Arabs and the Jews!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE RIVIERA OF PALESTINE

*April 24*

**T**HE next morning I went on alone to Migdal, the first colony below Rosh Pina. It is a settlement of about fifty colonists, lying on a low hill overlooking the Sea of Galilee, which is about three-quarters of a mile away. The colony consists of two parts—the old, comprising seven or eight shabby stone houses built around a large barnyard, and not at all attractive; and the modern part of the town—a broad, straight street, bordered by trees, and lined with six bright, brand-new, spick and span houses on either side. This is really one of the finest streets in Palestine. The houses had been built by an American, whom I had met on my first visit to Migdal some weeks before.

From the new I went to the old part of Migdal. There I encountered the secretary of

the colony. I had seen him here a week before, but I had not spoken to him. We soon discovered that we were bound by college ties—he was from Oxford, I from Harvard—and he told me that he had been at Harvard recently as a member of the visiting Cambridge-Oxford boxing team of 1925.

He had come to work in Palestine for two reasons: to learn Hebrew, and to acclimatize himself. For in two years he would return to England to finish his medical studies which he had left uncompleted; then he would come back to Palestine again, this time to settle permanently and practice medicine there.

He had been in the country for about three months, and was quite enthusiastic about Migdal. He told me that it would soon be the Riviera of Palestine, and that in a year this small colony would be a real city. Hundreds of plots had already been sold, and Jews from all over the world had already begun to come to this beautiful spot. There was a family from Switzerland, another from Russia, a third from America, and so on. The owners of Migdal

were about to start work on a hotel of some forty rooms, which would take care of tourists (now obliged to go to dirty old Tiberias nearby) and which would also serve in the winter as a recreation resort for Palestinians. One American had announced his intention of building an ice plant here, while other dreamers—probably Americans also, who can afford to have expensive dreams—were planning a boardwalk along the Sea.

The ghosts of the Hebrew soldiers who ages and ages ago fought for the land of Israel on the heights of that very cliff which still overhangs Migdal a mile away, and whose graves, the English student told me, can still be distinguished on top of the cliff, timidly peeping down over the brink at the Hebrew Migdal of today must have been frightened and puzzled to see their descendants miling and toiling and sweating at such strange labors on the shore of the Sea of Galilee below.

When he had showed me the place—including the rusty gun carriages in the barnyard, which are the memorials of the World War in

Palestine—together my friend and I set out for Tiberias. He himself would be passing through Tiberias on his way to Kinereth—a colony which lies down the shore of the lake some eight miles from Migdal—where he intended to visit a friend that day.

As we were walking along he pointed to a cliff in the forbidding mountains on the other side of the lake some fifteen miles away to the southeast, and told me that there, tucked away in that wild and impossible crevice, was the one Jewish colony which the Jews have established in Trans-Jordania — Bnai-Yehuda. Having examined that spot carefully, and realized that it is in the very heart of a country where each man's hand is against his fellow's—where the good old marauding and murderous habits of thousands of years ago still exist today as though the hands of time had been turned back to 1000 B.C. again, or never advanced from that date, I began to think—and still do—that the Jew has in him at least one of those qualities generally associated with

Vikings and men six feet tall and blue-eyed,—daring and fearlessness.

In Tiberias we parted. I had lost my map of the country, and therefore wandered through the dirty, dingy, twisted streets—the streets where Akiba had walked—in search of a new one. Finally I persuaded a stationer to let me take one of the propaganda maps of the Jewish National Fund. But when I asked him the price, he told me merely to put five piastres into one of the blue Jewish National Fund boxes. “I cannot take money for what is not mine,” he said.

We continued to converse in Hebrew until I told the man that I came from America. Thereupon he burst out in English: “Why, I’m an American myself. I came over with the Jewish Legion. Had I known you were an American, I should have charged you ten piastres, not five.”

Having replenished my supply of films, I started out for Mizpah. My program for the next few days would include all the colonies in the mountain district near Tiberias: Mizpah,



Hittin, Sedjera, Mescha, Sarona, Beth Dagan, Jabneel, Poriah, Har Kinereth, Kinereth, Daganian Aleph, Daganian Beth, Bethania, Menahemiah, and Gesher. From the last-named I would take the train for the Valley of Jezreel.

I took a bus out of Tiberias; but when, about a mile from the city, I saw the tombs of Maimonides and Akiba on the mountain-side, I almost leaped from the machine. Again I could see the ghosts which hover in Palestine.

I quit the bus. Soon I reached a narrow dirt path which left the state road at a tangent. This I rightly guessed to be a short cut to Mizpah, and followed. Skirting a cliff-like hill, and passing an Arab encampment several hundred feet below me, I soon came to a flat field, where I found myself within a quarter of a mile of Mizpah. Three-quarters of a mile away, to the right and across a small valley, lay Hittin.

I hurried on to Mizpah, and fell exhausted against the gate of the first house. A woman standing nearby directed me to a home where I might spend the night. There it de-

veloped that the one spare place was taken; but after supper—which included potatoes and chicken! — I was taken to another house, where I was given a narrow, hard straw couch in the dining-room.

Before going to bed I looked out into the darkness. Far away, to the north, like stars in the night, I saw lights twinkling on the top of an invisible mountain. They were the lights of Safed, which I had left the night before.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### A SABBATH WITH THE PIONEERS

*April 25*

**I** WAS awakened by the terrible flies. My host, a kindly little man of about forty, inquired sympathetically how I had liked my bed, and invited me to breakfast with him.

In answer to my questions as to the relationship between the Jews and the Arabs, he replied that the two did not mingle here. He, however, had an Arab servant, a fat, ugly, pock-marked old woman, of whom he told the following story:

This Arab woman was not so old as she appeared. She was less than thirty. Some six years before she had been handsome. A young Arab, fleeing to the country to escape serving in the Turkish army, had taken refuge in her father's house. They had fallen in love. Big with child, her brothers wanting to kill her, she had fled. Two children having been born to

her and died, she had returned to this region to live with the family with whom I now found her. Her brothers still wanted to kill her. But for the past six years she had found protection with this family here in Mizpah, until now she was as one of them and refused to leave them. She already spoke Hebrew. My host's children she treated as her own. I had been amazed earlier in the morning to see what love this hideous-looking woman lavished upon his youngest-born—an infant; she fondled it, and smiled at it, and cooed over it, until I had had to compare the baby's white with her own black skin to make sure that she was not the baby's mother.

After breakfast I explored the colony, which consisted of ten houses, built close together.

Mizpah lies upon a slope, about two hundred feet off the highway leading from Tiberias to Nazareth. It is laid out in the shape of an L. Behind each house, beyond the cowshed, is its garden, equal in width to the width of the house in front. This being a Rothschild colony, the older part of the colony is built as

Rothschild colonies are usually built: the houses are of stone, and set close together, each one separated from the other by a mere wagon space, the space being bridged by a gate; and behind each house is a cowshed, also of stone, each one next to the other, the sheds thus forming one continuous wall in the rear of the colony. The colony is thus completely protected from attack in the rear, and, when the gates in front are closed, walled in entirely all around; the result being an excellent fortress in time of need. That is how they built the old colonies—always with an eye to a chance attack from the natives—as, not so long ago, pioneers in the wilds of America used to build blockhouses and palisades with an eye to a possible attack from the Indians.

Today, however, Palestine is under British control, and such precautions are no longer necessary. The new houses are built of stucco or wood, and placed quite far apart.

My exploration of Mizpah over, I set out for Hittin, some twenty minutes away. This

was a religious colony, having been settled by the Mizrachi, the society for the advancement of Jewish orthodoxy both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. As it was Saturday, I made my way to the largest shack in town, where I had been told was the synagogue.

Unembarrassed by my shabby clothes, I walked in. Having been given a prayer book, I sat down. One of the men came over, and solemnly gave me his hand. And when the daily portion of the Torah was read, I had the distinction of being called up to the pulpit.

After the services I waited at the door for one of the men to invite me home to dinner, as is the custom among the Jews in the small towns of Eastern Europe. I was not disappointed, but gained a traditionally bounteous Sabbath meal.

During the meal I inquired whether the water came from the huge new concrete water tank, almost completed, which I had seen at the head of the village. But my host, pointing to a great iron barrel resting on the ground, explained that once a week they carted it to

a well in the valley below, where they filled it. All of Mizpah and the Arabs who lived in the neighborhood drew their water from that well.

"Is the water good?" I asked.

"Excellent," replied my host, "except that sometimes the natives bathe in it."

"Do you boil the water?"

"No."

"Not even the water the baby drinks?"

"No."

"Why not? Aren't you afraid she might get typhoid?"

"Oh, no. We want her to get used to this raw, impure water, so that she will never need to fear uncooked water, as she would have to if she became accustomed to boiled water now."

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From Hittin I returned to Mizpah, which I soon left to go on to Sedjera.

When I reached the hotel at Sedjera it was dark indoors, for it was still the Sabbath, and



TWO PALESTINIANIZED AMERICANS—MORDECAI AND EMANUEL ALLEN





therefore too early to kindle lights. In the dining-room—ghost-like in the gloom—a group of children and their elders were singing Hebrew songs.

At supper I met a young chalutz from Germany. He had studied medicine for two years; but, like so many thousands of European-Jewish youth, he had not been able to resist the call of Palestine, and had left his studies to become a pioneer in the Land of Israel. Obsessed with the ideal of rebuilding the Jewish nation, he was now, with the sweat of his brow and with his bare hands, helping to mould the waste places of Palestine into a land of plenty—a land of milk and honey.

He told me about the life of the pioneers here. In this twentieth century, this age of machinery and science, it was no different from the life of pioneers all the world over in all ages:—a life of poverty, of hunger and cold, of insufficient food and insufficient clothing, of danger from man and danger from disease, of sickness, of fever, of work—work

—work. The olives, eggs, and cheese we had that night were for him a banquet. And the most terrible part of it all, he said—and he gritted these words out between clenched jaws—was the sight of strong men, delirious with fever, calling and weeping for their mothers thousands of miles away.

I asked him, then, whether he would not like to return to his studies in Germany. But his answer was a passionate negative. The life here was wonderful. He had been here a year, and would never go back. He had had an opportunity to go to America—but his America was right here in Palestine. This was the land he loved, the land for whose future he was wearing his flesh to the bone. For him it was the only country in the world.

While we were eating a young couple came in—the man about thirty-five, his face pock-marked and lined with toil, yet sweet and gentle at the same time; the woman some ten years younger, girlish and pretty, with eyes and expression which could denote nothing but

what was beautiful in character. Theirs were faces which one sees only in places and homes where to live means to give, and where life is an unselfish struggle.

The man's name was Eleazar Y—. When he learned that I came from America, eagerly he asked whether I knew where Boston was; and when I told him that I had studied practically in Boston, he asked whether I had ever met his brother—Samuel Y—, there.

He begged me to visit his home that very evening, that I might see his children. His pleading was irresistible; he begged me as though I were the High Commissioner.

His house consisted of only one room, as is not at all uncommon in Palestine. It was furnished with a table, several chairs, a clothes chest, a bed, and a crib. In the latter, fast asleep, were his children—a girl of four and a boy of two. We tiptoed up to look at them. And his expression as he bent over his slumbering babes was one of the most beautifully pathetic I have ever seen.

We sat down at the table, and my host did the honors. He poured out a glass of wine for me—the very last glass of the bottle he had bought for the Passover.

## CHAPTER X.

### “OUR MOTHER TONGUE IS HEBREW”

*April 26*

**W**HILE I was dressing the German student came into my room. I learned that he was suffering from malaria—perhaps the greatest enemy the Jews have in Palestine, but one they are gradually conquering by means of drainage and other modern methods which they are bringing with them from the universities and technical schools of Europe.

Being under the impression that malaria could be got from drinking-water as well as from mosquito-bites, I asked the student whether the water in Sedjera was good. He replied that it was excellent, and that, besides, I had not the slightest cause for fear, since my body was strong enough to fight back, my resistance not having been undermined by undernourishment, lack of shelter, overwork,

and over-exposure, as were the bodies of the chalutzim.

We heard the doctor in the next room, and my friend went out to see him. Five minutes later, feverish and haggard, he came staggering back.

"*Gott! Gott!*" he groaned. "*Wieder'nmal! Wieder'nmal!*" The doctor had told him that because he had not taken quinine the last three weeks he would have to go to Tiberias for another inoculation.

"And you still do not wish to go back to Germany?" I asked. Through gritted teeth, with a face torn with agony, his eyes those of a fanatic or a madman, "Never!" he replied. "Better to die in Palestine than live anywhere else!"

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After breakfast I set out for Saron. It was fearfully hot, and people in the fields had stopped working, for in the hot season it is well-nigh impossible to work between ten and three. The workers go home to rest during those hours, and wait for the cool of the late

afternoon before they return to their tasks. But if I had adopted that principle I should never have seen Palestine; and on I went, then, until finally I reeled rather than walked.

In about an hour I came to a village where, although the houses were of the European type, the villagers looked like Arabs. This was a Turkish colony, I believe. Certainly it could not have been an Arab settlement. This was evident from the European houses, and from the European clothes which the men wore.

It seemed to be a holiday for them today. Scores of men sat in an open field listening to a band playing European instruments—more proof that these people were not Arabs.

I came to Sarona at about four o'clock. From a distance of a hundred yards it seemed to be no more than a mere row of houses some three hundred feet long. But upon coming closer I found that it was constructed in the form of a square, houses and other buildings being built in straight lines about a courtyard



in the center, which the entrances faced. This courtyard had but one outlet—a space some five feet wide, barred by a massive iron gate. Indeed, the place was a perfect fort; and barbed wires strung along portions of the outer wall seemed to indicate that it had once served in that capacity.

After some refreshment, I decided to go on—or, rather, back—to Mescha, a Rothschild colony situated at the foot of Mt. Tabor, which I had seen in the distance as I was staggering along toward Sarona. The directions I had been given in Sedjera evidently were wrong, for by visiting Mescha before Sarona I should have saved several miles of walking.

As I would have to return thither from Mescha before continuing on the rest of my trip, I left most of my baggage in Sarona.

One of the women, hearing that I was going to Mescha, asked whether she could accompany me—not merely to Mescha, but as far as Haifa, which was still more than a week away as far as my itinerary was concerned. This was the second time I had received such a re-

quest, the first having come from the girl with whom I had ridden from Tel Hai to Yessod Hama'ala; for in Palestine, where Jews feel and act like brothers and sisters—as they should—the women do not fear the men.

This particular woman, it seemed, had arrived in Palestine some two weeks before, and had almost immediately been sent off to the remote colony of Sarona. Now, not quite satisfied with the place, she wanted to visit other colonies before finally settling down. My own opinion is that, being somewhat advanced in years and desirous of getting married, she wished to go to a larger colony, where there would be a larger number of men and a correspondingly better opportunity of finding a husband.

Realizing that such companionship would hamper me at every turn, I told this woman that the trip would be very expensive, probably amounting to as much as a pound!(about five dollars); and in that way I managed to escape without hurting her feelings.

It was not long before I was in sight of

Mescha and of the great vineyards, olive orchards, and almond orchards that surround it. In front of the local synagogue I found a group of old men engaged in a heated argument, defending and attacking the character of a man of about thirty-five who had declared that he would not marry because he could not afford it.

“Why!” cried a man over seventy, indignantly stamping his foot on the ground. “Is he waiting for Rothschild to leave him his fortune? If I, my father, my grandfather, or my great-grandfather had waited until we had money before getting married, my grandchildren would not have any parents today!”

These older men, who had come to Palestine too late to take up the struggle of acquiring a new language, were speaking Yiddish. While they debated, however, some younger men came up and spoke to me in Hebrew. One of the old men, after vainly endeavoring to understand what they were saying, cried out in the language familiar to him: “Why don’t you speak Yiddish? That’s our mother

tongue." "No," replied one of the young men, "our mother tongue is Hebrew. Yiddish is the language of the *Galuth*."

This young man guided me to the dining-room of a men's kvutzah of which he was a member, where some five or six boys were then waiting for supper. In the dim light of a small and filthy lamp, one of them was frying eggs with onions on the usual kind of blowgun stove. These eggs, of which each man got the equivalent of one, made up the main part of the meal, the rest of which consisted of bread and cocoa. "Seconds" there were none.

These youths constituted a workingman's kvutzah; not having land of their own, they worked for others. They hoped, however, that in two or three years the Jewish National Fund would be able to assign them land; but until that time they would have to give up their ideal of going back to the soil, and work at anything they could get. Like the German student in Sedjera, they worked in a tobacco factory, where they earned fifteen piastres a day as common laborers.

I asked them whether fifteen piastres a day was enough to provide for their needs. It was, they said, itemizing their expenses as follows:—food, eight piastres a day (if you can call an egg, bread, and a cup of cocoa food for mature men who work with their bodies all day), and lodging, ten piastres a month. The shack belonged to some workingmen's organization which gave them non-profit-making rates. Then, of course, there were the other usual expenses—clothing, books, and the like.

Having seen the manner and the amount of food they ate, the sort of shacks they lived in, the kinds of beds and bed-clothes they slept upon, I know that if fifteen piastres a day was enough to satisfy their needs it was because it had to be enough. In Sedjera it had been sufficient to support a family of four, but only for the same reason.

When I retired to the sleeping shack, some ten feet away, to write my notes, a number of men came up to speak to me. Almost all of them, it seemed, were related to someone in America; and before I went to sleep I was

given a number of messages to deliver to kindred in New York.

The mattress I slept on that night was a mere strip of blanket, and my pillow a bundle of rags.

I dozed off with the howling of jackals in my ears.

## CHAPTER XI

### CHALUTZIM

*April 27*

**I**N the morning I took a bath by means of a pail, a huge pan, and a barrel of rainwater.

Later I went to the tobacco factory, to see my friends at work.

Their task was simple. Sitting tailor-fashion on the floor, they strung dry tobacco leaves upon strings. Next they pressed them close together, thus making compact braids. The braids would then be massed together into blocks to make up the final bales.

These boys would have to spend several years at this miserable sort of work before they would be able to get the kind of work for which they had come to Palestine.

At eleven o'clock I left Mescha. It was fearfully hot, my canteen was empty—I could not stomach the water they drank at the kvutzah in Mescha—and I thought I should not be

able to reach Sarona, whither I was now returning. Had there been any shade, I should have laid down and rested; but between Mescha and Sarona I think there was not a tree, while the sun beat down fearfully, and unmercifully drove one fainting on to a place where one could get away from it. I reached Sarona hardly able to drag myself along.

I was desperately in need of water. But here, too, I could not drink the water. Fortunately, however, they were at that moment beginning to have their lunch, and their lunch today consisted of cold soup. I drank one plate of it, then a second, then a third, and it all seemed a drop. Then I had three glasses of tea. And still I was faint and thirsty. Good or bad, healthy or foul, barrel or no barrel, I had to have water, and so finally I gulped down three glasses of it from the barrel in which it was kept, brackishness and all.

After resting for a while I descended the ravine that led to Beth Dagan, some twenty minutes away from Sarona, and a half mile before Jabneel. These three settlements, as well as



Mescha, Sedjera, and Poriah, are on the top of the mountain that borders the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.

On the way I passed two or three chalutzim at work digging ditches—drainage ditches to carry off stagnant water. While they worked the mosquitoes which bring malaria hummed merrily about.

A little above Beth Dagan I saw a number of men and women busily at work at various tasks tending, apparently, all to the same end. Some of the men were filling barrels with water at the outskirts of the town, then carting them to the fields. Others were carrying boxes to the same place, while the rest were working at the spot to which the barrels and boxes were being brought.

One of the men told me that they were planting tobacco. The boxes contained tobacco shoots—leaf-like plants, some three inches long, with roots. They had been raised in flower beds, very close together, and now it was time to transplant them to roomier ground before they choked one another. This was at

present being done. The furrows, which had already been prepared, were first irrigated with the water from the barrels, after which the tobacco shoots were set in the soil at wide intervals.

Beth Dagan had two workingmen's kvutzoth. I visited one. Its living quarters consisted of a number of tents and a large, floorless shack. I thought it was a makeshift camp for the warm weather; but I learned that these colonists had been living in these flimsy quarters for over a year, through hot and cold, dry and wet. They, too, were waiting until the National Fund would be able to give them land.

From this kvutzah I went straight on to Jabneel. There I immediately sought out the doctor, on account of my rash which had begun to bother me again. The physician told me it was a tropical skin disease called charara, caused by heat and sweating, from which almost every newcomer in the land was bound to suffer.

There were two workingmen's kvutzoth here in Jabneel, of the same type as that which I had just left in Beth Dagan: the same tents, and the same shacks.

I soon found that they were a friendly lot here—mere boys and girls, who gathered about me and peppered me with innumerable questions.

The tent where I was put for the night was furnished in the manner common all over Palestine. There were three cot beds, forming an equilateral triangle within the circle of the tent, which was of the Indian-tepee kind. Within the triangle were a table and a lamp. Under each bed lay a clothes chest. There were no mattresses, thin blankets serving to cover and take the edge off the wire springs beneath.

In vain I tried to sleep. The "mattress," my rash, and the sound of voices in one of the neighboring tents all combined to keep me awake. When finally I succeeded in falling into a light doze I was brought to my feet by

the sound of a tremendous report seeming to come from a point almost at my ears.

Someone had accidentally fired off a pistol which he had thought empty.

Again I had trouble in falling asleep. The three beds in my tent were all occupied, but what was my surprise when a fourth man—the man who had guided me to my bed before—also came in and prepared to go to bed! I soon guessed what was coming—this man doubled up with one of his comrades in an army cot whose width measured less than a yard.

That night three men did not sleep well.

## CHAPTER XII.

### DOWN TO THE SEA OF GALILEE

*April 28*

**P**ORIAH, some four miles off, in sight of Jabneel, was situated on top of a hill which mounted upward in a gradual slope some two miles long. But what the slope lacked in steepness it more than made up in length and in the difficulty of walking uphill through deep grass.

The colony consisted of some three or four dwelling houses and an extraordinarily large number of outhouses. The dwelling houses were remarkably big for Palestine; aside from the one house in Yessod Hama'ala, they were the largest I had so far seen on my trip through the colonies.

When I left Poriah I followed the edge of the mountain to the right. A magnificent view now extended before me. Below, of an indescribable blue, lay the Sea of Galilee. Far to

the north towered Mount Hermon, grey and snow-topped; while across the lake, high and abrupt and forbidding, rose the mountains of Transjordan. Between the Jordan chasm to the south and the heights upon which I was now standing I could distinguish five colonies, their buildings tiny as doll-houses—Har Kinereth, Kinereth, Dagania Aleph, Dagania Beth, and Bethania.

I plunged down the mountainside, soon leaving Har Kinereth—a colony of some eight or ten wooden shacks—behind. By following the wagon road which corkscrews down from Har Kinereth to Kinereth below, I found myself in the latter settlement some fifteen minutes later.

Before me stretched the waters of the Sea. There was one thing I wanted to do, and I did it quickly. I went down to the beach, took my clothes off, and, some four hundred feet down the shore, out of sight of the houses of Kinereth, I plunged into the water.

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In Kinereth there were two kvutzoth, one a

permanent, the other a workingmen's kvutzah. To describe this latter kvutzah would be to repeat what I have said about those in Mescha, Beth Dagan, and Jabneel.

I entered the shack. A most depressing sight met my eyes. Half the space of the room was taken up by four or five cots tightly jammed together. The other half had just been paved with clay, still damp, oozy, and pungent. The air was full of flies. Worst of all, a chalutz was lying on one of the beds, his feet in sacks. Going barefoot, as so many of them do here, he had probably got his feet infected.

I did not stay long. From this workingmen's kvutzah I went to the landed kvutzah, built in much the same way as the settlement of Sarona—like a fort. But some of the buildings were larger. In fact, having expected so big a place to house many more, I was surprised to learn that there were only fifty people in this kvutzah.

I continued on my way to Dagania Aleph; but just outside the wall I remembered that the

English student whom I had met at Migdal had told me that an acquaintance of his was working at this very kvutzah. Since it was dusk, and Dagania Aleph was still some three-quarters of a mile away, I felt that there was no time to turn back now; but I stopped one of the women colonists and asked her to tell the Englishman that there was someone staying in Dagania that night who spoke English and wanted to see him.

Soon I heard someone behind me calling in English. Of course it was the Englishman. He was a fine-looking fellow, some eighteen years old, sturdy, muscular, brown, and good-looking—good-looking in spite of the oversized and ragged farmer clothing he wore. Evidently not having had time to put them aside, he still carried his tools in his hand.

We talked for about fifteen minutes, while it grew dark on the shore of the Sea. I learned that he was quite melancholy; and, indeed, he looked it. He had a most woebegone expression on his face. He said he was in that frame of mind because he was not doing the kind of



work he had expected to do in Palestine—chicken-raising—and because the people here, Eastern Europeans, did not understand him and his way of living and thinking. However, I am sure that the real cause of his unhappiness was plain, old-fashioned homesickness, and nothing more. He did confess to me that he missed people who spoke English. He was the only one who spoke or understood that language here. On the other hand, he was probably the only one in this colony who understood neither Yiddish nor Hebrew. Having nobody to speak to in a place full of people, he might just as well have been deaf and dumb.

It was dark when I parted from him.

Soon I heard the chug-chug of the motor that pumps water from the Jordan into the two Daganias. Three minutes later I was traversing the bridge that spans the Jordan practically at the very spot where it leaves the Sea of Galilee on its course to the Dead Sea—a spot no more than about five hundred feet from Dagania Aleph.

As Dagania Aleph was a kvutzah, I went di-

rectly to the dining-room. I was amazed at the meal they served. Compared with what I had been eating these past nine or ten days, it was a banquet. There were cheese pancakes with dressing of onions and half a hard-boiled egg, tea, bread, and—most remarkable of all—cooked fruit! My soul went forth to meet that cooked fruit.

Supper over, several of the women began to put cake and wine on the table. I did not know what to make of it, until, when some thirty visitors came in, I learned that the settlers from both Dagania Aleph and its sister colony Dagania Beth were celebrating a *brith* which had taken place in Dagania Aleph that morning. Perhaps this also explains the supper; although I am inclined to believe that the unusual amount and excellence of the food were due, not to the festive occasion, but to prosperity and successful farming. The fine children's house and park which I had seen there on my previous trip through Palestine indicated such a state of affairs in Dagania Aleph.

The room was now full to overflowing, and in an uproar. These men, many of them formerly students, and children of well-to-do families in Europe, whatever they had been ten years ago, were now pioneers and bordermen; and as such they had the bodies and clothes and songs and amusements of pioneers and bordermen. There was no mincing here. These people, as our backwoodsmen and their families used to do out West when a marriage or a birthday was to be celebrated, or a quilting party to be held, enjoyed themselves with vigor and boisterousness and abandon. At such a party as I now saw before me Abraham Lincoln had more than once been present. And who knows what dangers did not lurk outside tonight in the mountains beyond, just as they did in the forests of Ohio and Indiana and Missouri a hundred years ago? Trans-jordania, with its bands of roving robbers who live with their knives and their guns in their hands, was not so far away, and even here we were east of the Jordan.

Soon they started to dance. There was a



## PIONEER CHILDREN



phonograph here—still another sign of wealth and success. They danced the hora—a dance they have brought with them from Eastern Europe. As the phonograph played, they sang, and as they sang, they danced. Each one putting his hands upon the shoulders of his neighbors on either side of him, some fifteen of them thus formed themselves into a perfect circle. Off to the right they gyrated, then, having taken several steps, abruptly they reversed and danced almost an equal number of steps in the opposite direction; all of them meanwhile rhythmically and vigorously stamping with their feet; and keeping this up without variety, without change, hour after hour; while from time to time the exhausted ones dropped out and new recruits, without even a moment's halt in the dance, eagerly took their places.

Having watched them until ten o'clock, I thought it high time to go to bed. One of the colonists found me a place to sleep in the children's house.

In the middle of the night I awoke. I could still hear the monotonous notes of the hora and the rhythmic beat of heavily booted feet in the dining room a hundred yards away.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THROUGH THE VALLEY OF JEZREEL

*April 29*

**D**AGANIA ALEPH, with its fine, large eucalyptus trees, its profuse vegetation and tropical foliage, was like an oasis in the desert to eyes that for so many days had seen only the treeless pastures and grain fields of Upper Galilee. Especially exhilarating was the avenue of trees leading down to the Jordan.

In the midst of the park is the children's house—a two story structure with a covered roof garden. Its body of white stucco and roof of pink tiling present a most colorful contrast to the green foliage about it—like a pink and white bud amidst green leaves. Here, living in the outdoors, eating wholesomely, and brought up by men and women of strong bodies, strong minds, and strong souls, the children of Daganian are trained to be, not



scions of the medieval ghettos, but stalwart Jews, proud of their heritage and prepared to share in the upbuilding and spiritual renaissance of their Homeland.

From Dagania Aleph I strolled over to Dagania Beth. This newer colony, situated in the midst of a dry, bare plain, with hardly a tree or a shrub in view, clearly indicated to me what Dagania Aleph had been fifteen years ago, before the Jews had "reclaimed" the soil.

Some seven miles south of the Daganias, on the western bank of the Jordan, is the Arab village and Jewish settlement of Gesher. Here, the train from Semakh on Lake Tiberias stopping there on its way to the Valley of Jezreel, and Haifa on the coast beyond, there is a railroad station, at which (having now visited practically every settlement in Upper Galilee, except two—Bethania and Menahemiah, which lie between Kinereth and Gesher—and planning next to go through the Emek Jezreel, which opens out upon the Jordan valley only a few miles below Gesher) I that afternoon intended to take the train for Afule. It being

now ten o'clock, the train leaving Gesher at four that afternoon, and there being still seven hot miles to be traversed and two settlements to be visited on the way, I decided to start out for the latter place at once.

Bethania and Menahemiah lie on the west side of the Jordan, and so again I had to cross the bridge over which I had come to Dagania Aleph the night before. I soon came in sight of the Yemenite settlement which lies between Kinereth and Bethania, the name of which I do not know. Perhaps it has no name.

Here dwell the Yemenites, that strange tribe of Arabian Jews so different from their fellow-Jews. Only the Bible has kept them bound to their brethren of a different civilization and world; and the Bible it is which today is bringing them, together with their co-religionists from every other part of the globe, back to Palestine.

Some five minutes below the settlement I reached a pumphouse, inside of which a motor was whirring. Nearby stood a Yemenite boy—he was a strange child with his black skin and

his little corkscrew curls hanging beneath his ears—who told me that this pumphouse is used for irrigation purposes. It lifts water from the ditch below, and carries it into the fields above.

The settlement proper consists of five tiny little houses—doll houses, they seemed. Here, according to the boy, were housed seven families—I do not understand how—while in the pumphouse lived an eighth.

From the Yemenite settlement I went to Bethania, which is on the shore of the Jordan about fifteen minutes further on. This is an Ica (Jewish Colonization Association) farm employing some thirty people.

From Bethania I continued on to Menahemiah. Menahemiah is modeled on the usual type of Rothschild colony. The one thing about this village which still stands out in my mind is a garden bed, marked off by beer bottles and planted with tobacco, in the form of a *Mogen David*, which ornamented one of the front yards.

It was a most uncultivated and deserted

region through which I passed on my way to Gesher. The seared grass gave it a most dreary and sterile appearance, and from the bleak and drab country rose mountains bare and uninviting. At the foot of the western slope of the valley the Jordan, here a broad and powerful stream, rushed roaringly and forbiddingly along. Yet there is an undeniable charm and fascination to this country, for the wilderness and loneliness that exist there today are the wilderness and loneliness which have been part of this soil these thousands of years. And once, as I passed an Arab boy watering his flock of goats in the river, it seemed to me that I was looking upon Joseph, son of Jacob, who tended the flock of his father in these regions three thousands years ago.

In mid-afternoon I reached the colony which is Gesher. Despite its situation on a low cliff overhanging the Jordan, it is perhaps as unattractive as Ein Zeitim, for neither the shabby and nondescript stone buildings nor yet the negligible adjacent scenery have a great deal of pictorial value.

The modern depot provides a refreshing contrast to the rest of the village. It is built of a clean, whitish-yellow stone, and its newness and roominess make it inviting and bright and cheerful—as are many of the railroad stations which one finds in Palestine today.

I did not have long to wait for the train from Semakh. Two or three colonists boarded it with me. The car in which I found myself was different from the usual third-class car. Instead of having an aisle with seats on both sides, as we in America likewise do, it was divided into compartments in the European style.

In my compartment was a pretty girl of twenty who had also taken the train at Gesher. She was obviously not of the chalutz type—her skin was too white and soft for any but a city girl. And, indeed, after a few minutes of conversation—for introductions are quite unnecessary in rural Palestine—I found that my impression had been correct. The girl was new in Palestine—she had arrived but two weeks previously—and she had not yet had

time to settle down to work. But she wanted to, and had come to Gesher to see what opportunities might offer there for her.

I asked her whether she expected to live in Gesher. She was not yet certain. In Europe, it seems, she had contracted malaria, and now she was looking for a spot free from the insidious disease. Gesher, she told me, is *not* such a place. But if she could find none better, she would settle there anyway.

The train sped along through the desolate region of the Jordan. Thirty minutes south of Gesher it turned westward, entering the Valley of Jezreel. Within a few minutes we arrived at Beisan, an Arab town. Thence we continued toward the west, stopping at Shutta and Ain Harod, and passing along the road five Jewish colonies. Finally, an hour and twenty minutes after leaving Gesher, we arrived in Afule.

Espying at the station a youth idly watching the passengers descend, I approached him and asked him in Hebrew to direct me to Balfouria. Rather shamefacedly, he answered me in

Yiddish. "Can you speak Yiddish?" he asked. "I am here only two months, and I haven't had time yet to learn Hebrew." So I spoke to him in Yiddish.

Suddenly he interrupted me. "You're an American, aren't you?" he queried in English.

"Yes—but how in the world were you able to tell?" I replied, astonished, in the same language. For reply, he pointed to the Harvard seal pasted on the case in which I keep my camera.

"But," I wanted to know, "where are you from?"

"Oh, from Newark, New Jersey," he told me. "I came out to Palestine to work for my cousin. He owns the store and hotel in Balfouria."

My countryman was waiting for his cousin's wagon, which would soon be coming from Balfouria to fetch some packages from the depot. He offered to take me along. Since Balfouria was two miles distant—though it looked to be less than one mile away, for the air in Palestine

is so pure that distances are remarkably deceptive—I gladly accepted his invitation.

While we waited, I gathered that this boy's cousin had come from America a year before. He was an ardent Zionist who had bought land in Balfouria from the Zion Commonwealth of America—the Zionist company which owns Balfouria. First he had come by himself to “spy out the land,” and then he had brought his entire family over. But his work at the hotel and the shop left him no time for cultivating his land, and so he had soon sent for his cousin—who was only too glad to come—to help him.

The boy was full of enthusiasm. “Do you see this spot?” he exclaimed, and he pointed about him to the station, the restaurant, and the additional building or two—mere hovels—which make up Afule. “Well,” he continued, “in a year's time you won't be able to recognize this place.” He went on to explain that the same company that owns Balfouria was going to build a city here. They had already begun work. “Do you see that rubbish



there?" he asked, pointing to the broken remains of a few Arab huts a short distance away. "That's all that's left of the village that used to be there. They bought the land from the Arabs, and then pulled the village down." Nearby was a large patch of cactus, half of which, as I could see by the freshness of the stumps, had but recently been chopped down. My companion pointed to it. "They're cleaning that away too," he added.

Just then the wagon drove up, and soon we were in Balfouria.

It is a beautiful place. Its pretty little pink and white houses contrast vividly with the bright green of the slope upon which it lies. Above it rises the mountain called Givat Hamoreh, while below it, flat and carpet-like, and here and there interspersed with rectangular chocolate patches where the rich soil has recently been plowed up, spread the vast and lonely stretches of the Plain of Esdraelon—a dreamy sea of soft and velvety green. I remember that on my return trip to America I met a Roman Catholic who was just completing

a tour of the world. "Do you know," he said, "there's a place there in Palestine that's the most beautiful of any I've seen in the whole world. It's a Jewish colony. They call it Balfouria."

We arrived at the hotel. The owner was in Haifa at the time, but his wife and offspring, which consisted of eight daughters ranking all the way from nine months to sixteen years of age, afforded me a hearty welcome.

For the first time in two weeks I spoke English.

## CHAPTER XIV

### MORE AMERICANS IN PALESTINE

*April 30*

**A**FTER breakfast the next morning I went over to the shop, which was a small room built as an extension to the stable. I at once noticed various things there which were not in the least Palestinian. On the walls were photos of two or three thinly-clad American dancers gracefully kicking their toes in the air. On the shelves were cans of Dutch Cleanser, and other American grocery products. Such articles as these plainly indicated that there were American families in the village.

While I sat there talking with the hotel keeper's oldest daughter, Jacob, my friend of the day before, came in. He told me that one of the Americans, a Baltimorian, having heard that there was another countryman of his in

town, wanted to see me. Since he lived nearby, I strolled over to his home at once.

He stopped work—he was building a porch to his house—and we sat down on the ground and talked. He had come to Palestine three years before. For a time he had studied agriculture at the Mikveh Israel Agricultural School near Tel Aviv. Thereafter he had lived in Tel Aviv, until his mother had come from America to join him. Then they had settled in Balfouria. Recently he had married. His wife, he told me smilingly, did not speak a word of English. “You’d never have thought at home, would you,” he asked, “that an American-born would marry like that?”

“And how do you like the life here?” I wanted to know, as visitors always will.

“Wonderful! No city life for me anymore—no luxury, no noise, no hustle, no bustle, no shams. Here we live normally. This is the kind of life man was meant for.” And his eyes shone.

Just then his mother came up to tell him that it was time to try and wean the calf. “I

have one cow and one calf," he told me. We all three walked over to the barn. While the two of us held the calf, its head up and its mouth wide open, the old lady poured mash down its throat.

I asked my host if he would not show me about the place. "Of course," he replied, "This is my slack week. You see, my neighbor is using the horse this week. Since neither of us can afford a horse of his own, we own one in common, and take turns at using it. This week it is his turn, so I have plenty of time to take you around."

The barn in which we were was a tiny affair, but attractive in its tininess. Like all the barns in Balfouria—they are all built uniformly—it was of concrete, very solid-looking, and two stories high. It was so small that the owner had found it necessary to build an extension. This was still incomplete, "for," said he, "I need twenty or thirty dollars to finish it, and I haven't got the money." Near the barn stood a tin structure about as large as the barn, which was used as a storehouse for grain and

other bulky products of the field. It had cost two hundred and fifty dollars.

Next we went to the house—a stucco affair with three rooms,—a bedroom, a living-room, and a kitchen. The bedroom contained *twin beds*, and next to the porch-to-be was a small walled-off space which, my friend told me, “I hope will some day be a real *American bathroom*.” The influence of the old life across the Atlantic was evidently still strong in the new life of this self-made Palestinian.

I asked him how much all this had cost. “Five thousand dollars,” was the answer. “The barn and house cost two thousand, the land—one hundred dunams of it—twenty-five hundred, and miscellaneous items five hundred. I borrowed this money from the Zion Commonwealth. But, besides this, I have put money of my own into the property. Yes, it certainly takes a lot of money before a farm like this can be made to pay. That’s why so many newcomers go to the cities. There, with less than a third of what this place has already cost me, they can open a small business and begin to

make money at once. But it's worth it, for all that."

Before leaving him I met his wife. She was a big woman—bigger than her husband. Tall, broad, full-breasted, and beautiful, she was a perfect example of that wonderful Jewish type of womanhood which is filling Palestine to-day—that type which is necessary for the building of a nation and the bearing of children at the same time—a type which has a fine body and a fine soul. Deborah must have been such a woman as this one.

I visited the school, which is at the head of the settlement. It consists of two buildings, one of which houses the school proper, the other the kindergarten, which I visited first.

One of the most striking examples of educational progress in Palestine is the emphasis laid on kindergarten training. Although the adults are of necessity, and voluntarily, deprived of many of the pleasures incidental to manhood and womanhood, they nevertheless—or, perhaps, because of that—insist that their children be not lacking the rightful

privileges of childhood. The parents eat less that their children may play more, for they know that all too soon their time too will come to toil and sacrifice, and at least childhood should be carefree.

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I now planned to remain in the Emek for six days, meanwhile visiting all the colonies in the vicinity, with Balfouria as my center. There I would leave all my baggage with the exception of a few immediate necessities. I planned first to visit all those colonies to the east of Balfouria, lying between Balfouria and Beisan, and then those settlements to the west, on or near the road to Nazareth. Then I would return to Balfouria for the last time, and, taking my baggage, would continue on to Nahalal and finally to Haifa on the coast. That would conclude my travels in Galilee.

At about noon, taking only my camera, my canteen, a notebook, and a very small bundle of clothes with me, I set out for Merchavia, which is some three-quarters of a mile from



Afule. Once there, I went directly to the kvutzah.

When I entered the dining-room the colonists were just finishing their meal. They invited me to partake of a lunch of soup, pancakes, beans, bread, and cake—one of the few real meals I had eaten so far on this hike of mine. This, together with the phonograph I saw in one corner, seemed, indeed, to indicate a most successful and prosperous community.

In the dining-room was a closet full of books—the kvutzah library. Most of the settlements have their own little libraries. Though the colonists lead a life physical in the extreme, they still find the time and energy to read.

After dinner I inspected the outside. This kvutzah is built about a square barnyard enclosed on three sides. The dining-room and kitchen form one side, the barn and sheds another, and a row of five or six houses—the living quarters of the members of the kvutzah—the third.

Behind the row of houses I met a young fellow whom I asked the way to Kfar Yechez-

kel. This man immediately spotted me for an American—"because," he explained in Hebrew, "you see, there are forty members in our kvutzah, and over one-fourth of them are Americans who came over with the Jewish Legion during the war. Your Hebrew accent is the same as theirs, and that is how I was able to tell."

Just then a wagon drove out from the barnyard and came flying down the road. "I think they're going to the very place you want," the chalutz cried, and immediately he shouted to his comrades on the wagon to stop.

A moment later, my teeth nearly shaken out of my head as we scurried along over the steep and uneven turnpike, I was hanging on to the wagon for dear life.

Forty-five minutes later I was in Kfar Yechezkel. It is like the "movie" version of a small western town—a colony of flimsy and unpainted wooden shacks. There were some eighty of them there—a picturesque, if not a beautiful, sight, and a fascinating and inspiring one, too, if one considers the ideal behind

it. The inhabitants, with their rugged looks and rough dress, help mightily to strengthen the romantic western flavor. I should not have been surprised had someone suddenly started to "shoot up" the town.

The wagon stopped at the town shop—quite a large one. There they sold almost everything under the sun—groceries, candy, boots, drygoods, tinware, livestock feed, wine, and what-not. It was an exact replica of the usual American small-town emporium.

I was very tired by now, so I looked about for a place to take a short nap. I did not want to lie on the ground, for the German student in Sedjera had told me that there were snakes and scorpions here. Finally I climbed upon an empty wagon which I found behind one of the houses, and, covering myself with my overcoat against the cold wind, I slept for a while. When I awoke I refreshed myself with a bag of biscuits and a bottle of inexpensive, but surprisingly excellent, wine.

I next wanted to go on to Ain Harod, which lies just opposite Kfar Yechezkel on the other



THE AUTHOR TRAMPING THROUGH PALESTINE



side of the valley. The man who had brought me here was now returning to Merchavia, and I rode with him until the point at which the road to Ain Harod meets the road from Kfar Yechezkel to Merchavia.

Ain Harod seemed but ten minutes away, but—again having been deceived by the apparent shortness of distances in Palestine—I found it to be really quite a long walk. On my way I passed the spring of Ain Harod, at which Gideon's three hundred men "lapped water like dogs" when the Lord told Gideon to go down against the Midianites. Then, turning left, I skirted the base of Mt. Gilboa, where long ago the Philistines defeated the children of Israel, and Saul and Jonathan fell by the sword. Soon crossing a bridge, I found myself in the midst of the settlement.

Ain Harod now seemed to me twice as large as it had been when I had visited it the month before. Colonies in Palestine possess the potentialities of Jack's beanstalk.

I did not stop at Ain Harod at all. I boarded a passing wagon and continued

straight on to Tel Yoseph three miles further on down the valley.

We passed a number of men and women who were returning to Ain Harod on horseback from their day's work in the field. One woman, broad and powerful, head thrown back, chest forward, skirts up to her knees, revealing her broad, brown, bare legs, reminded me strongly of the Wife of Bath, or Hippolyta the Amazon, as you will.

Further on we came up with a tall, slender, young fellow, pack on back. He climbed up beside me. I asked him whether he, too, was hiking through Palestine. "Oh, no," he replied, "I'm going to Beth Alpha to settle there. I came from Germany two weeks ago." Another Jew returning from the Exile!

Tel Yoseph was a kvutzah of some forty shacks arranged in two rows, forming a sort of street. West of this street was the barnyard, while at its foot lay the dining-room. On a small hillock beyond the dining-room were four or five additional shacks.

I came just in time for supper. The dining-

room was huge, capable of seating the entire population of three hundred people. The tables were placed along the walls, and at one of them I chose a place and sat down.

I had brought along the rest of the bottle of wine that I had bought in Kfar Yechezkel. This I now put upon the table, and, happy that I had at last found an opportunity of giving as well as taking, I invited my companions to drink. They were not slow to accept. One of them seized the bottle, and, holding it high up out of reach of his comrades, he poured while the wine lasted. The last drop, only, he saved for himself.

In Tel Yoseph were two young Americans, a girl and a boy, whom I had met in Jerusalem. The girl, a graduate of Smith, had come to Tel Yoseph to settle; the boy, a rabbinical student, merely desired to work there a few weeks in order to obtain some idea of the colonists' life. For these two I now watched, and I soon had the pleasure of meeting them.

Of this girl I cannot think without a feeling of warm admiration. She was tall



and slim, with a face beautiful in its combination of sweetness and intelligence; looking every inch of her what she was—a woman of character, refinement, and culture. An idealist, she had torn herself away from an environment of luxury and ease five thousand miles away, and, afire with the desire to help in the rebuilding of the ancient land of her ancestors, with her thin body more fitted for silk than cotton, with her ignorance of the language and the ways of these fellow-Jews of hers from the other side of the world, had come to Palestine with her long and tapering fingers to do her share in the work of rebuilding.

I began to notice a thrill of excitement in the air. People were gathering in groups, talking and laughing and singing. At supper time the dining-room had been overcrowded, and for many there had been no seats. The street was full of people restlessly strolling about, and from time to time a wagon-load of newcomers would noisily come rolling in from a neighboring colony.

I soon learned from my friends the reason

for all this stir. Tomorrow, May 1st, was Labor Day, international holiday of the workman, and as such it would be observed here. There would be a big all-day celebration; lectures in the morning, games in the afternoon, and a big party at night. Colonists were, and would be, pouring into Tel Yoseph from all over the Emek to participate. I had come to Tel Yoseph in the nick of time.

It soon became evident that the merry-making would begin even before the morrow. A number of men and women leaped onto the platform in the dining-room and began dancing the hora. As they circled to the right and the left, and rhythmically kept time with their feet, the pulse of the crowd quickened. Carried away by the excitement, I was about to leap upon the platform to join them, when a restraining hand was laid upon my shoulder. It was the American. "Don't," he said, "you'll spoil the dance." I shall not soon forgive him for depriving me of that experience.

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## CHAPTER XV

### FRONTIER TOWNS

*May 1*

**T**HIS promised to be an unusual day. Flags were flying. Wagon after wagon-load of colonists came rumbling down the hill into the barnyard, until Tel Yoseph was swarming like a beehive. Men and women were dressed in white. The men's washroom—a shack extremely well ventilated by means of wide cracks which must have made washing on a cold or windy day far from pleasant—was crowded with men shaving and taking showers. The messroom stage was decorated with branches — though heaven alone knows whence they came.

After breakfast the official program opened with a series of lectures delivered from the platform. The subject matter, naturally enough, was Labor. But the audience was not particularly attentive. They were too excited

by the holiday spirit to be quiet long, and were impatient for the big attractions of the day—the games and the party.

But I did not wait for these events. Instead, I walked the mile and a half to Beth Alpha, the colony which is adjacent to Tel Yoseph in the opposite direction from Ain Harod.

As I approached, I was surprised to hear the notes of a piano. Overjoyed by the anticipation once again of running my hands over a keyboard, I immediately tracked the music to its source. In a sort of music room containing a piano, several other instruments, and some huge piles of music books, I found a girl leisurely playing a tune. But unfortunately, she gave no sign of finishing in the near future, and finally I had to leave the room without having had the chance to gratify my desires.

I was rather curious to discover how this piano had come here; I was sure the colonists had not had enough money to buy it themselves. I joined a group of colonists who were sitting and chatting in the dining-room,

and, sure enough, I learned that the instrument was a present from a friend of the colony, who had sent it all the way from Europe.

Leaving the dining-room, I next inspected the huts. Compared with those in Tel Yoseph, they were mansions. There they were mere shacks, inside and out; here they were more like houses, and, moreover, quite agreeable to look at. The floors were nicely polished, and the walls quite solid. In such dwellings as these one might live permanently—and comfortably, too. Those in Tel Yoseph were also permanent, to be sure, but only because there was no money to build better ones.

Glancing through the window of one hut, I noticed a bookcase filled with neat and expensively bound books—really a striking sight in this land of physical toil. A young fellow sat there reading. I entered, but he paid no attention to me. I selected a book of Heine's poems, and sat down to read. The chalutz, evidently without fear of theft, left me to myself; and it was a delightful quarter of an hour which I then spent at my book.

On the street again, I was charmed by the sight of a tiny gazelle, calm and unconcerned, grazing a few feet away from me. I thought it tame, it seemed so unafraid of the human beings who were watching it. But I learned later that it was wild. It speaks well for the gentleness of these colonists that a wild gazelle will come to feed on their very doorsteps, especially when these colonists can neither afford to buy, nor can obtain, meat.

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In Tel Yoseph again, I went down to the athletic field to see the football game scheduled there for three o'clock. The participants were the Tel Yoseph and Afule teams—the latter consisting of chalutzim engaged in preparing the ground for the coming city at Afule.

The game, truth to tell, was not very exciting. More interesting to me was the frontier crowd in frontier clothes and with frontier ways that stood on the side lines.

This impression of westernism was strengthened when a man, dressed like an Argentinian cowboy—long boots, cowboy hat,

cowhide lash—came galloping up on a fiery pony. All around the field he went. Suddenly his horse seemed to have gone wild. Through the crowd he tore, and as he advanced the crowd fell back on all sides before him; when all at once a man, leaping out from the midst of the crowd panther-like upon him, seized the rider as he galloped by, and dragged him to the ground. It seems to have been a bit of a sport, for five minutes later the rider was again cantering about the field upon his wild mount.

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The party that night was to take place at nine. It was now about six. Deathly tired, suffering from toothache and my rash, which had again returned, I decided not to wait for the party, but to try to get back to Balfouria at once. I thought there would be wagons soon going in that direction, for it was hopeless for me to think of reaching Balfouria that night on foot. So, having bid my American friends farewell, I set out for my hotel again.

The wagons I had expected did not come,

and I had to walk all the way to Ain Harod. When I arrived, it was already dark. Since I was feeling sick and exhausted, I decided that I must remain in Ain Harod that night even if I had to sleep in the gutter.

There is a hospital in Ain Harod—the property of the Kupat Cholim. My rash worrying me, I went in to see the doctor. He told me what I had been told by the doctor in Jabneel—that I needed rest and water.

Leaving the hospital, I met a girl, whom I asked if there would be a place for me to sleep in Ain Harod that night. She took it upon herself to inquire. She brought me up to the library, a room built on top of four huge cylindrical structures—silos for storing grain—where we found a group of men reading newspapers. She asked them to find a bed for me. When they promised to do so she left. I waited, but when the men, apparently having forgotten about me, continued reading, I descended from the library and went on to the mess hall, where everything was dark but the kitchen. There I found the girl who had been



so kind to me just a few minutes previously. When I told her that the men in the library had failed to take care of me, she thought for a few moments, and then smiled and said: "Don't worry, I have found a bed for you."

It was a beautiful place to which she led me—beautiful in its neatness and tidiness. Rough walls were smoothed over with white-wash. There was no floor, but the ground had been covered with slate-like tar paper. Beds were spread with linens white as snow, while above each bed rose a tent of fly-netting likewise spotless. There was not a speck of dirt nor a trace of disorder. I felt that I had come home.

Pointing to one of three beds in the room, the girl said: "That is yours. My sister usually sleeps there, but she is now in Jerusalem."

In other lands I should have slept out of doors that night. But Jews in Palestine wash the stranger's feet, as their forefather Abraham did long, long ago.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### THE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

*May 2*

**A**IN HAROD, blessed with a powerful spring, is one colony in Palestine which seems to have an over-abundance of water; in almost all of the other colonies—except those in northernmost Galilee one has to look far for it. At one point on the slope upon which Ain Harod lies, a tremendous stream of water powerfully gushes forth from a large pipe, and down a channel it rushes to join and augment the waters that flow in the brook at the foot of the slope below. There I saw a number of colonists, towels slung over their shoulders, busily engaged in scrubbing and washing; and there, over the water where it left the pipe, I too washed.

Breakfast over, I returned to Balfouria.

About a mile and a half above Balfouria,

where the slope which finally leads up to the base of Givat Hamoreh flattens out for a few feet to make a sort of narrow shelf, is the settlement of Kfar Yeladim. Here live one hundred and fifteen boys and girls, the orphans of parents who were victims of the World War or anti-Semitism in Ukrania.

Kfar Yeladim consists of two or three large structures, some four or five small houses, and a few tents. One very large building was still in the process of construction; and I take it that the tents housed the chalutzim who were working on it.

Seeing a group of adults assembled on the steps of one building, I went up to them and asked to be directed to the manager of the orphan asylum. I had a general letter of introduction which I showed to one man who seemed to be particularly interested. This man then called to a boy standing nearby, who immediately led me to the home of Mr. G—, from whom I wanted certain information.

The orphan asylum is supported by Jews from South Africa—rather a long jump from

Ukrainia. The children range in age from five and a half to sixteen. Everything is being done to train them to be self-supporting and self-sufficient men and women. The land of the colony, consisting of nine hundred dunams, is cultivated almost entirely by the children. They are also trained in housekeeping: they do their own cooking, washing, and cleaning. In short, they are both the kept and the keepers of the orphan asylum. Meanwhile, of course, they attend school. This takes eight hours a day. Four hours are spent upon purely educational, four upon practical studies. Purely educational studies include such subjects as history, mathematics, geography, etc.; while practical include the various phases of actual agriculture: planting, harvesting, care of fruit trees, etc.

In the middle of supper, to which I was invited, one of the boys stood up and made a prayer. He was followed by one of the teachers, who rose and started to make an announcement. But the children were not very respectful in their attention. After the first moment,

indeed, the teacher had to shout to make himself heard. As the meal progressed, the noise increased, until one could hardly hear one's own voice. It was evident that the children were not brought up to feel that they were objects of charity. They acted too unrestrainedly for that. It is certain that *Oliver Twist* never participated in such meals.

After the meal I had a chance to speak to one of the older children, a boy about fourteen years old, short, but powerfully built, with the self-reliant look of a man on his brown face. I asked him whether it was true that they spoke only Hebrew here. "Yes," he replied. "And the language you spoke in Russia?" I continued. "Oh, I've almost forgotten it," he answered.

"How long are you here?"

"A year and a half."

In less than two years the boy had lost one mother language and acquired another.

As I descended the slope to Balfouria, I thought I was walking upon air. My head

ached, but my heart sang. Of all that I had seen in Palestine that which I had just seen was the most beautiful. It is no small thing to see children whose parents had been hunted down and killed like rats, who two years before had lived in Hell, now smiling and laughing, carefree and happy, in a land where there are no pogroms, where Jews are not dragged by the beard, on a spot healthy and beautiful, a spot high up on a mountainside overlooking that wonderful valley where roam the ghosts of their ancestors of old, and where toil and sweat their elders, their fellow-Jews, their brethren of today.

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## CHAPTER XVII

### A NEW ULYSSES

*May 3*

THE following day I had lunch at the hotel, where I became much interested in the proprietor's all-around assistant, who, as such, served also in the capacity of waiter. As he served me, he told me about himself. He had lived all over Europe, and could speak six or seven languages, including English. He had worked in Italy, in Poland, in Austria, and in Russia. Now he was working in Palestine. He had come to Palestine but recently. "And," he finally concluded, a resolute look upon his face, "from now on I go no further. In Palestine I stick."

Another Ulysses had come home.

Going to the shop, which was taken care of by the proprietor's daughter, I asked the girl if she was satisfied with her new life in Palestine. "I'm wild about it!" she burst out

enthusiastically, being after all an American.

Soon I met her father. I put the same question to him. The answer he gave me was one in perfect accord with the expression he habitually wore on his face, an expression of complete satisfaction with himself and the whole world.

\* \* \*

I had now been on my hike some two and a half weeks. I had seen practically all of the colonies in Upper, and most of those in Lower, Galilee. There still remained some two weeks before me in which to tour Judæa and Samaria. In Lower Galilee I still had Tel Adas, Transylvania, Jinjar, and Nahalal to visit, all of them in the Emek. But I now felt that I must immediately return to Jerusalem to rest if I wanted to be able to continue on to Judæa and Samaria later. I had been unaccustomed to the hot sun and to the food, or, rather, the lack of it, and I was at present in no condition for hiking. So I determined that I would give up the remaining four or five colonies in the Emek and take the train to Jerusalem.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### BACK TO JERUSALEM

*May 4*

**A**T two I was awakened by the howling of jackals and the barking of the dogs in Balfouria who replied. Twenty minutes later four of us were silently and rapidly walking down the long and straight stretch of road which leads from Balfouria to Afule.

“A year ago,” said one, “it would have been unsafe to walk along this road after dark.”

In the stillness of the night we could hear the tread of footsteps behind us. “They are coming from Transylvania. Some nights there is a regular stream of colonists going down this road.”

Soon we arrived at the station. A number of colonists—silent and shivering in the raw morning air—were already waiting. One by one others continued to file in. Many of them carried bags or baskets. They were probably

a marketing crowd going into Haifa to buy provisions for the week to come. Such a crowd as this I have more than once seen of a Friday morning in our small New York villages, when the menfolk go into the city nearby to do the marketing for the Sabbath.

The fact is that for a moment I did think I was upstate in New York. These people really did look like American farmers. The clothes they wore were the kind which farmers in America wear when they leave the farm and go to the city: city clothes which fit poorly and are rather the worse for wear. Their faces and bodies were those of men who work with their hands under the sun. It was only when I saw the skirts of some Arabs also waiting for the train that I remembered that I was in Asia Minor.

\* \* \*

Soon we were speeding northwestward towards Haifa and the Mediterranean, over the vast floor-like spaces of the Plain of Esdraelon. Far away to the right and to the left of us I could just barely make out those dim low

mountains which form the rim of the plain. From the plain's flat bottom, like shrouds, arose thin wisps of morning mist which one might easily have imagined to be the souls of the countless warriors who were slain here thousands of years ago. For we were now passing over the "greatest battlefield of the world," "the battlefield of all the ages." This way ran the main route between ancient Egypt and Damascus, and over these now ghostlike stretches the countless armies of the dim centuries had marched. Here fought the armies of almost all the great empires of the world, from that of the Pharoah of 1500 B.C. to that with which Allenby fought less than ten years ago. Here Sisera and Napoleon fought. Here also were raised the banners of the Roman legions. Here too the Scriptures tell us that the last great battle of the world will be fought, for this is probably the field of Armageddon. And here the Jews, after two thousand years, according to the prophecies of their prophets of long ago, are now returning to wage the new battle of their nation—the battle which is

being fought with plowshare and pruning hook instead of sword and spear.

\* \* \*

On we went through the mist. We stopped at Tel Esh Shemmam and Acre Junction, where solitary Arabs hovering about seemed like shadows in the fog. But gradually it grew lighter. Soon we could make out, to the left of us, the Haifa Cement Works, new and handsome. We were now almost in Haifa, and I expected any moment to see the sea. A few moments later it appeared. To the right of us, solemn and colorless in the mountain air, lay the Bay of Acre, its beach fringed with palms. Then past the Rutenberg Power Plant we rolled.

I now made preparations to continue on to Jerusalem. There were two ways—one by automobile, the other by train. If I went by automobile, I should have to go by way of Afule, thus repeating a good part of my trip. That, however, I did not mind. The beauties of the Emek are not to be exhausted by one or two rides. But going by way of Afule I should be

entering Jerusalem from the north. What I wanted was to approach it from the south, by way of the more southern Mountains of Judæa. And that was just the way the train would bring me. I remembered the first time I had approached Jerusalem. The thrill, the feeling of awe that the newcomer to Palestine experiences as the train puffs up between the narrow valleys of the biblical Mountains of Judæa, while every moment brings him nearer and nearer to that wonderful city of the ages of old, is indescribable. And it was in the hope once again of experiencing that same wonderful feeling that I now wanted to return to Jerusalem by the way I had come to it the first time.

So at eight o'clock I boarded the train.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE CITY UPON THE SAND DUNES

*May 7*

**A**FTER resting in Jerusalem two days, I continued on to Tel Aviv, the new Jewish city on the Judæan seacoast, which, with a fast machine, lies less than two hours from Jerusalem. For the rest of my trip Tel Aviv would be the center of my travels.

Though the way down the Mountains of Judæa was steep, the road was excellent, and we fairly flew along. Some three miles out of Jerusalem we passed Motzah, a Jewish colony by the side of the road. Soon we saw the hospital of the Kupat Cholim, still in process of construction. Deeper and deeper we dipped, until some forty-five minutes later we had reached the foothills of the Mountains of Judæa and were rolling down the slope into the Plain of Judæa. Behind us lay the Vale of Ajalon, where the moon stood still when

Joshua cried out: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the Valley of Ajalon."

We crossed the Plain of Judæa. Some two or three miles outside of Tel Aviv, the main highway being in a state of repair, we took a detour to the right. For about three miles we travelled over roads which were simply hideous. Of loose sand, and shapeless, they were merely one rut after another. But making an abrupt turn along the edge of a clump of trees, in a trice we had left this no-man's-land behind us and were rolling over the comparatively smooth streets of Tel Aviv.

The very first instant in Tel Aviv I saw what symbolizes this new city of the Orient: a surveyor was measuring out lots. Fifteen years ago Tel Aviv was only a sand dune. Five years ago there were five thousand people living there. Today there are over thirty thousand. The Jews have built Tel Aviv overnight—and, at that, they have only just begun.

Half of Tel Aviv seems to have been built but two weeks ago; the other half is still un-

finished: houses without roofs, houses without windows, houses without staircases, houses without doors. Along streets of sand hurried countless wagons—wagons carrying sand, wagons carrying lumber, wagons carrying brick. And beside them, hastily bobbing along, came as many camels, their backs swaying under the same materials. Tel Aviv, like Jack's beanstalk, grows under one's eyes.

\* \* \*

In my trip through Judæa, I intended, whenever possible, to travel by bus or train; the amount of time I had left at my disposal was too small to be spent in needless walking. Accordingly, having settled myself at a pension, I repaired to the railroad station to obtain a time table.

Happening at one point by chance to glance down at the sidewalk, I noticed that the little cement blocks, perhaps eight inches square, which composed it, were all ornamented with designs in the form of the Menorah. Zionism in Palestine is evidenced even in tobacco beds and sidewalks.

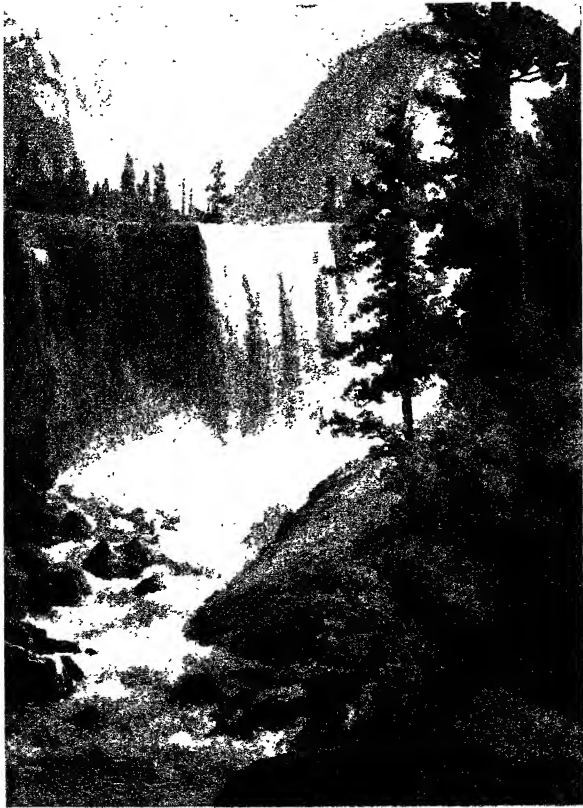


A few hundred feet further on, coming to the point where the tracks cross Allenby Boulevard, I turned off to the left, where lay the station only five minutes away.

I was soon overwhelmed by signs of building. Houses were going up on all sides. My attention was soon attracted to one in particular when I saw a woman put her head through one of its windows, which alone was furnished with a glass and a curtain while all the other windows in the house were mere holes in the walls. Having heard of the critical housing conditions in Tel Aviv due to its lightning-like growth, I decided to investigate.

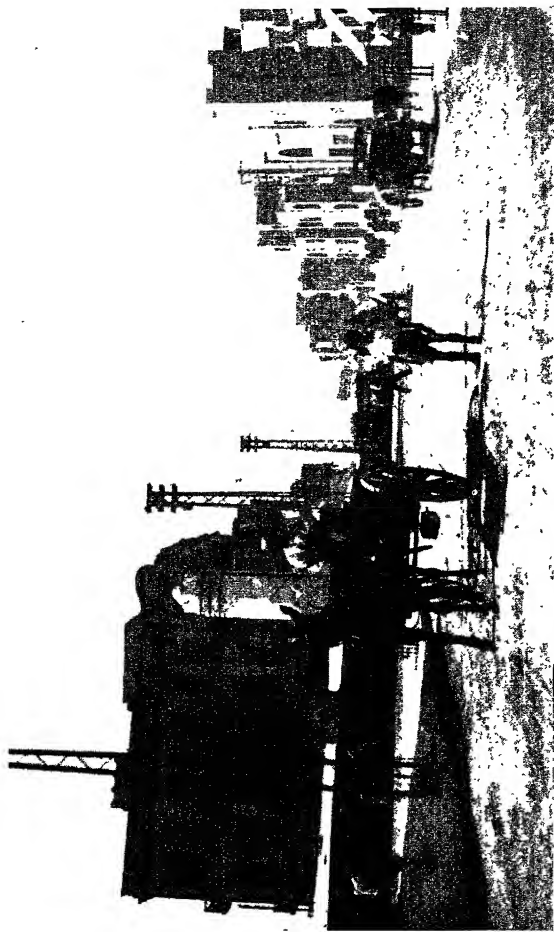
The house was a two story affair, without a roof. Except in one corner of the house on the ground floor, there were neither stairs nor doors nor windows. A woman came to the one door, in answer to my knock. "Does Mr. P—live here?" I asked, looking over her shoulder at the same time, and seeing that the room within was completely furnished in every detail.

So people were already living in a house



VERNAL FALLS, YOSEMITE  
From Original Painting by Chris Jorgenson





FOOT OF ALLENBY BOULEVARD, TEL AVIV



which had no roof. At least one story, then, which I had heard of Tel Aviv was not exaggerated.

Continuing down the tracks, I came to sidings where there were carloads of stone and brick. Up and down beside the tracks, their backs weighed down under huge loading-boxes, were hurrying along, hasty but haughty, long strings of unhandsome camels. The camel of the romantic Orient was doing hard Western labor.

I came upon an out-of-door brick manufactory—a makeshift one, evidently—where a number of men were at work making bricks. The Jews having long made bricks in Egypt for the Egyptians, were now engaged in making them in Palestine for themselves.

I stopped for a few moments to watch these men. The brick-making consisted of the following process: a large amount of sand and a small quantity of cement having been thoroughly mixed together, the mixture was slightly moistened with water. After that, having been packed into iron forms and smoothed down,

the mixture was allowed to come out of the forms in the shape and size of the finished brick, which was then set out to dry upon a board.

After an unsatisfactory lunch in Tel Aviv proper, I went into a small grocery to buy some halvah. A middle-aged woman was in attendance. She spoke only Yiddish—a newcomer in the land. I knew this, however, not because she spoke Yiddish, but because she told me so. The fact is, not all those who speak that language are newcomers. I have observed that the older people are when they come to Palestine, the less they try to acquire the new language. Thus I have met colonists over sixty years old who, though they have been in Palestine twenty years and more, continue generally to speak Yiddish, just as Jews often do in America who have come to America as middle-aged men.

I asked the woman the usual question: did she like it in Palestine? Very, very much, she replied enthusiastically. She was making a nice living. Then again, the Jewish life here

was so fine. Here a Jew could really be a Jew. In Europe he could be one only in secret, or with reservations, for there Jewishness meant persecution. But in Palestine, the more Jewish a person was, the more warmly he was received. When people here went to the synagogue of a Saturday morning, they went with heads high, not cringing, as if they feared to be seen. Their step was not that of trespassers, but the step of those who feel they are walking upon their own estate.

Still eager to learn about housing condition in Tel Aviv, I asked the woman about her home. She and her family lived in one room, which, of course, had to serve as bedroom, living room, and kitchen, all three. They had no electricity; electricity in Palestine, even in the cities, is still the luxury of the chosen few. And for this one room, which was not in the finest of houses or neighborhoods, the woman paid three pounds a month.

When immigrants are flocking to a country by the thousands every month, and there is neither time nor capital enough to keep up



with the demand for quarters, such high rents come as a matter of course. Families cannot afford more than one room, and if they could, there would be no more to be gotten.

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That evening I took a walk through the streets of Tel Aviv. It was a warm, moonlit night, and the streets were crowded. Shops were bright and inviting and varied: toy shops, food shops, pharmacies, clothes shops, candy shops. The streets ran straight and regular. The houses—European houses—loomed large and high and square. There was no Oriental filth or squalidness to be seen. Women wore white silk dresses, and men suits. It was a modern city, and a modern city crowd. I could almost imagine myself in New York. It was only when I saw other men, men dressed in khaki, stalwart, muscular, deep-chested, their stride firm and vigorous, their arms and legs bare, their square-jawed heads thrown back, their great powerful chests forward, that I realized that only two miles away jackals were howling, and that fifteen years ago all this had

been a mere nameless sand-dune by the sea; that men like those whom I saw here bare-armed tonight, dreaming strange dreams and drawn by strange yearnings, had sailed across the sea like the Vikings of old, and built this city upon dust.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE RELIGION OF WORK

*May 8*

**H**AVING been told that there was a bus leaving Tel Aviv for B'nai B'rak at about 6:30 A. M., I awoke at 5:45. I hurried up Allenby Boulevard to Shechem Street, and in a short while was being jolted over the roads which lead to B'nai B'rak.

We soon passed the suburb of Nordia, a very short distance from Tel Aviv. Then came Shechunath Boruchov and Eer Ganim, two adjacent settlements that are really one.

At about eight I was in B'nai B'rak. The bus stopped in front of the store. Its front was decorated with a sign, in English, advertising "ice cream, lemonade, and meals." It was headed by the word *cafe*, spelled with two "fs." Such a sign, appearing in English, and advertising such luxuries as ice cream and lemonade, was evidently meant for American

and English tourists, for B'nai B'rak, being so near to Tel Aviv, is within easy reach of tourists, who come to the more accessible places in large numbers.

Breakfast over, I left my baggage at the store and went out to explore the settlement. Almost directly in front of the shop men were engaged in laying a pipe for which a deep trench had already been dug beside the road. I learned that B'nai B'rak had no adequate water supply as yet, and that therefore a well was now being dug, the water from which would be pumped into a large storage tank on top of a huge and cliff-like hill which was pointed out to me on the other side of B'nai B'rak perhaps a quarter of a mile away.

When this water system would be completed, the settlers in B'nai B'rak would be able to cultivate their land, which at present was mere sand—as was practically all of the country from Tel Aviv to here—sand covered with a sparse sprinkling of dry grass. With water this sand would become soil. It was only a matter of irrigation.

The street through the center of the town had been squarely cut through a hillside. Beyond the hillside were more houses, invisible from the store. B'nai B'rak is built along a sort of S-shaped valley, so that one cannot see the whole of the settlement at once, unless one looks down at it from the top of the hill.

The houses were, for the most part, mere shacks. And how ridiculously small some of them were—one-room affairs—but such tiny rooms! If the reader remembers the small shanties used by watchmen at railroad crossings, he will be able to visualize these new buildings.

The whole settlement was but eight months old.

I noticed that Yemenites were employed in B'nai B'rak. It was a rare sight to see these small, black-bearded men wheeling wheelbarrows along while the long white fringes of their *tsitsith* hung conspicuously out from under their shirts. These Yemenite Jews are extremely orthodox.

The European Jews here are likewise of the

orthodox type—Mizrachi colonists. While the more modern of the colonists are generally clean-shaven, the orthodox wear their beards long. Their dress is that of the European ghetto: long black coats reaching below the knees.

\* \* \*

I climbed the steep hill on top of which was the water tank. It was a vast panorama that I then beheld. To the west lay the Mediterranean; to the south, the Philistine plain; to the northeast, the gnarled and crumbling Mountains of Judæa. In the southwest lay Tel Aviv, and Jaffa right adjacent; while there were many other settlements and towns scattered about whose names I did not know.

Seeing a young fellow dressed as a chalutz climbing a huge concrete staircase with terraces on both sides which led up to the side of the hill, I went forward to meet him. He was a boy, short, brown, and muscular—the usual type of young man in Palestine. I learned that he had lived in the country for years. He had even been graduated from Mikveh Israel, the

French-supported agricultural school near Tel Aviv. That was about a year ago. He was now eighteen years old.

Pointing to the steps and terraces, still in the process of construction, up which he had just come, he explained that he was foreman there.

When he learned I was an American, Zeav told me that he hoped some day to be able to study agriculture at the University of California. Asking me to wait, Zeav hurried down to his hut, at the foot of the hill, and returned with a half-dozen letters and pamphlets from that university. He would be admitted to the study of agriculture, the letters said, but he would not be given a degree unless he took certain preparatory courses. The pamphlets were of the usual variety, explaining the various colleges in the university, giving a description of the dormitories, prices of rooms, etc. All these I was now called upon to read and explain.

Having finished with his personal affairs, Zeav took it upon himself to repay me by serv-

ing as my guide. Taking me up to the top of the water tank, he explained all that country which I had previously seen but not understood.

He began with Petach Tikveh to the east, a colony buried under a wilderness of trees. Then, pivoting to the right, far away to the south he pointed out several trees towering high above the rest of the landscape. Those, he told me, were the oldest trees planted by Jewish hands in the new Palestine. Nearby was Mikveh Israel. Continuing his circle to the right, he showed me Tel Aviv and Jaffa on the coast. Several miles to the north of Tel Aviv was an Arab village, on the other side of which, also on the coast, was the American-owned colony of Herzlea. He thought that Tel Aviv and Herzlea, and even B'nai B'rak, which is about five miles from Tel Aviv, would some day be one; so unbounded was the belief of the Jews here in the far-reaching potentialities of Tel Aviv. It has grown up overnight, and they cannot conceive that it will ever stop growing.



Then, to the north, Zeav pointed out a lone tree standing on the bank of a small river. This had been a difficult point for the English during the war. The Turks had held one bank of the river, and the English had been unable to cross. Finally the men of the Jewish Legion were sent to attempt the task, who, by chopping down trees from a small wood nearby and choking the stream, had succeeded in passing over. But during the attempt a great number of men—two or three hundred, Zeav said—were drowned. Near the tree which he had just pointed out was a monument to the memory of these men.

We then descended to Zeav's hut. On one of its walls was a picture of a man with an indescribably fine face. I had seen that picture all over Palestine. It was that of Joseph Trumpeldor, who had fallen in the defense of Kfar Gileadi.

Having been in B'nai B'rak all morning, I decided to return to Eer Ganim and Shechunath Boruchov, which I had passed earlier in the morning. On my way to the latter colony,

which is but a stone's throw from Eer Ganim, I noticed a number of stores which clearly indicated the influence of a city nearby; I had not seen them in the "backwoods" agricultural colonies of Galilee. The grocery shop was common; that, of course, one finds in almost every colony which has more than a handful of settlers. But the butcher shop, the cobbler's and tailor's shops, were new to me in the rural settlements of Palestine.

In front of one of the shops was a garden of beautiful flowers—a lovely spot. Five feet away was the sand of the road, mere dust. Water had turned the sand of which the road was made into soil capable of producing the wonderful flowers which I now saw.

My knapsack needing mending, I stopped in at the shoemaker's. He was a small, grey-headed old man, his eyes keen but kindly. He loved Palestine. But some of the people were not what they should be, he said. They were not religious enough: on Saturday they smoked. He himself was not very religious, but such excesses even he could not bear. He had

a daughter in America who was unhappy for the same reason. Her husband earned fifty dollars a week (he mentioned this sum with pride and respect), but when it came to Pass-over he had to come home late to the Seder because he was detained at his place of employment.

I thereupon remarked to the shoemaker that he must be well satisfied with the Yemenite Jews, who were extremely religious. They, he replied with a smile, were already too much so.

The shoemaker lectured me on the two adjacent colonies, and told me to be sure to visit the girls' training farm in Shechunath Boruchov. They were fine girls there. Were *they* religious? I asked. No, they too sewed on Saturday. But they were fine girls nevertheless. They worked hard, very hard, and had a wonderful farm.

The first sight that greeted me at the girl's farm was a fine vegetable garden. A bit further on I came to a flower patch, and saw thousands of small flower-pots scattered about. I

surmised that the girls must be in the floral business, which later I found to be true. The four main products here were flowers, vegetables, poultry, and milk.

Questioning one of the girls, I was told they had eighty dunams of land. It was wonderfully well-kept: beautifully green, and, where the soil was upturned, beautifully black. There were twenty-two or twenty-three girls here, no men. Two men, however, were employed to do the hardest work. As yet the girls had no special sleeping quarters, sleeping where it was most convenient at the time. (The girls at the Girls' Agricultural School in Nahalal were sleeping in unused chicken coops when I had last been there).

The workers here were women rather than girls: big, broad women with faces calm and mature, the flesh of their faces taut with hard work. Evidently used to visitors, or perhaps not suspecting me of being one, they allowed me to go about without notice.

The live stock happened to be assembled when I entered the stable. There were fifteen

large head of cattle and five calves. Their skins were like velvet. Some of the cows were incredibly huge. I had never seen or dreamed of their like before—more of the size of the bullmoose than of cows. The stable was kept as if for the Kine of the Sun; it was the cleanest I had ever seen.

I left the farm feeling that the shoemaker had been right. I now experienced the same indescribable feeling which I had experienced a week before when I had quitted the orphan asylum of Kfar Yeladim. This was an extraordinary place.

And all this the work of women.

I now returned to the main road, to wait for one of the buses which occasionally travel from Tel Aviv to Petach Tikveh. Soon one came along. It was crowded to its full capacity. The driver, however, stopped for me, much to my surprise, since it is a misdemeanor punishable by fine in Palestine to overcrowd a car. But he told me later that he had not had the heart to let me walk to Petach Tikveh.

Forced to sit on the mounting-steps in the rear, my ride to Petach Tikveh over those fearful sand roads could not have been worse had I been riding a bucking broncho.

Though the road was of sand, the fields on both sides were of different stuff: fields beautifully fertile. This land had not been neglected, as that of B'nai B'rak had previously been. Here the Arabs had tilled the soil. And irrigation had done its work. There were many wells in these fields—primitive wells. Round and round went the mules whose evolutions raised the water.

Until the outskirts of Petach Tikveh the fields were open. There, however, trees began to appear, and in Petach Tikveh itself they became so thick that one could hardly see more than twenty feet off the road. Most of them were fruit-trees—lemon, olive, and especially orange; but there were also non-fruit-bearing trees like the eucalyptus. The pioneers in Petach Tikveh had had the foresight to plant for beauty and shade as well as for gain.

Petach Tikveh with a population of four

thousand being the largest agricultural colony in Palestine, I had expected to find it more like a city than a village. I was disappointed. The only houses I saw were those directly on the side of the road. The rest were buried amidst the trees. The only indication of the fact that there were really several thousand people living here was to be seen in the various kinds and large number of business establishments extending along the two main streets.

In Petach Tikveh lived the girl who had been with me on the wagon in which I had gone from Metulah to Yessod Hama'ala some weeks before. She was working at the Kvutzah Maavar, whither I straightway made my way upon leaving the bus.

Maavar consisted of thirty-seven tents, pitched military-wise in straight rows. Some two hundred feet below was another group of tents, likewise systematically arranged. There I counted thirty-four. This, it seems, was a different and independent encampment. Near it was a shack, only half-completed—the fu-

ture dining room, evidently. Outside of it were several tables. Their dining room still unfinished, the chalutzim in that encampment had to eat in the open. Maavar itself was more fortunate. The small and flimsy shack which served as its dining room already had a roof on it.

The dining room was jammed when we went in for supper. Since each tent held three occupants, and since there were thirty-seven tents in Maavar, there must have been at least a hundred people in that small room. Some of them had to eat standing. Rachel found me a seat, however. Seeing her standing, I offered it to her. "No! No! I have one!" she cried, pointing over my shoulder and hurrying away. A few minutes later I turned around and saw her in the rear of the room still standing.

The meal was surprisingly good: we had meat.

Supper done, we returned to the tent. Three or four young men and women came in. We sat on the beds and talked. All of these



colonists intended to be present at a workman's meeting in Petach Tikveh that night. When they set out, I went with them.

Through the woods and down the hill we strolled. It was very quiet in the fields. The stars in a cloudless heaven shone as calmly as they had that night when Jacob, fleeing before his brother Esau's wrath, pillowed his head on a stone in the wilderness.

As we went along, some of us sang. The others chatted. But they spoke in Yiddish—and spoke in Yiddish until that happened which I had been expecting: one of the *chalutzim* abruptly interrupted: "N'dahbayr Ivrit," and from then on they spoke in Hebrew.

Upon my asking what the purpose of tonight's meeting was, one of my companions told me that the *chalutzim* (who received such small wages that they could not afford to eat eggs, or butter, or milk, or sleep on mattresses) were intending to raise money for those unfortunate fellow-workmen of theirs in Europe who were being transported from Russia to Siberia by the Soviet Government.

The meeting that night was noisy, overcrowded, and disorderly. But it was pervaded with a beauty all its own—the beauty which lies in unselfish actions.

## CHAPTER XXI

### CHALUTZIM FROM AMERICA

*May 9*

**I** HAD two places to visit near Petach Tikveh: Machneh Yehudah and Ain Ganim.

These settlements were really part of Petach Tikveh. I first went to Ain Ganim, which consists of a single street at right angles to one of the streets of Petach Tikveh. It boasted a small workman's kvutzah, consisting of six tepees and a tiny lean-to of two rooms, its walls and roof of straw mats. In the lean-to were kitchen and dining-room, affairs no more than seven feet square each. One chalutz in bare feet was tidying up this miserable place, sweeping the dirt floor and then sprinkling it with water to lay the dust. Men and women of Palestine try to make homes of whatever hovels they are obliged to live in. They are forced to live the life of the open, but the home instinct prevails.

Passing through Machneh Yehudah, which proved to be even smaller than Ain Ganim, I came upon an old and withered Yemenite woman. In her Arab pantaloons and with her dark skin, she looked for all the world like an Arab. In fact, I did take her for one at first, and discovered my mistake only when, a few moments later, I turned back in the hope of getting into a conversation with a Yemenite man whom I had passed a while back.

I found the man feeding chickens. I sat down on a stone to watch. Soon the old woman came up and sat down nearby.

"It is warm," she said, just as we do in America when we want to enter into conversation with a stranger.

She spoke with an Arab twang, but she spoke Hebrew. She was a Jewess, then.

When, in answer to her inquiry, I told her where I came from, she remarked that life in America must be much easier than it is in Palestine. She was much surprised when I told her that even in my country people suffered.

A Yemenite girl came up. Like many of the people I have seen who are natives in this part of the world, she had bad eyes. One eye was out of focus.

Hearing I was an American, "Is it true?" the girl asked, "that when it is day here it is night in America?" When I replied in the affirmative, she shook her head incredulously.

It was a playful group. The old woman had a mouthful of golden teeth about which the man teased her; they were evidently a rarity here. She was rich, he told her, and lugubriously shaking his head remarked that it was a pity that when she died she would have to be taking all this wealth along with her.

I got up to leave. Though I did not accept—I had just had breakfast—to my delight they offered me something to eat. I felt, though our skins were different, that we *were* kin after all.

An hour later I left Petach Tikveh, bound for Magdiel further north.

Now and then I passed an old tumbledown shack, possibly once the home of an early

settler, many of whom by means of their orange groves have today become rich, and now live in fine houses. Once in a while I could see a red roof peeping out from above the trees, and passing by one grove I heard the notes of a piano.

I continued on, until, coming to a point where the road turned to the left, I inquired the way of an Arab who soon came riding up on a donkey behind me. Pointing to this road, "Magdiel?" I asked. "Dugerry, dugerry, dugerry!" the Arab cried, nodding assent; and to the left I went.

I came to the place of the Seven Mills, about which I had been told in Petach Tikveh. Here a river, passing through seven tunnels, turned the wheels of an Arab mill. The water was stored in a marshy, though not in the least stagnant pond on the right. The tremendous force with which it was sucked down into the tunnels below me caused me to feel some of those qualms which Ulysses must have experienced as he hung above Charybdis.

At a crossroads further on I again asked the

way of an Arab—a pleasant-looking, handsome, bearded old man. “Was willst du?” he replied in Yiddish. I gazed at him dumfounded as he directed me—but then it occurred to me that he must have worked in Petach Tikveh, where large numbers of the Arabs in the vicinity earn their living, and, incidentally, learn to speak the language of their employers.

A mile up a slope which I was soon climbing I heard singing. It was the tune of the hora. Though the sound was near there was no one in sight. On continuing my climb, however, I soon saw beneath me an interruption in the slope; and there, tucked away out of sight of the highway, was a chalutz encampment, on the outskirts of which a group of chalutzim were zestfully dancing the hora. After a day’s work of the hardest kind—work which demands sweating of the brow and bending of the back all day—these people still had strength and spirit enough to dance and sing.

I went down and watched them. When the dance was over I spoke with them. And when



CHALUTZIM FROM Kfar Saba





they heard that I was an American they told me that two countrymen of mine were working here. At the moment they were out of camp, but they would be back directly. I decided to wait for them.

Having finished their dance the chalutzim then turned to a new form of recreation. Six of them holding hands formed themselves into a circle. Then, all of them running about a fixed center and thus gaining momentum, every alternate one of them, suddenly and abruptly leaning back, thrust his feet out from under him into the center of the circle; and, the remaining three still on their feet and running, the first three, their feet forward and together in the center, allowed themselves to be spun about on their heels like a three-armed top. They tried this several times, but were unsuccessful; the three who thrust their feet forward, not thrusting them forward at the same time and into the exact center of the circle, the circle broke. Finally the young fellow who had introduced the game took his turn at being pivoted; and the game ended when,

having to the accompaniment of the laughter of the onlookers been dragged on his back in the dust, he wrathfully pursued that one of his partners whom he accused of having been responsible for his upset.

But this chalutz was no sorehead. Having caught up with and boxed the ears of his fleeing comrade, he returned and immediately began a new game.

He seated himself on a bench, and while one chalutz would thrust his face forward into the cap which this man held upon his knees, thus practically blindfolding himself, some one of the other chalutzim who had gathered behind the man stooping over would give this blindfolded and stooping man a tremendous whack with the flat of his palm. Each time he was struck the man who was down tried to guess who had struck him. If he guessed right, it was then the striker's turn to bend over. This game is played in America with variations.

It came one tall, skinny, long-nosed chalutz's turn to be spanked. He thrust his

face into the cap. When he raised it his nose had become black. Some one had slyly doctored the cap's lining. When this fellow, though not before another half-hour had gone by, discovered the trick that had been played upon him and good-naturedly smiling went off to wash, the game ended.

Meanwhile it had begun to grow dark, and, having been invited to do so, I decided to spend the night here.

At supper somehow the subject of t'fillin came up. A certain rather hard-faced man offered to sell his set for twenty piastres, much to the uneasiness of more than one of the company present. But he was serious about it, and when no one accepted his original offer he lowered it to fifteen, at which price one of the men readily accepted.

The exchange made, the others became subdued and restless. It seemed that they were ashamed.

But that is not the end of the story. That night the purchaser of the t'fillin happened to be in my tent. Presently the original owner

came in also. "See here," he began, with a sheepish smile, "here's your money, and give me back my t'fillin. I don't want to sell them after all."

"That's right," answered the other, "you shouldn't have sold them in the first place."

But the owner seemed to fear that he might be thought to be old-fashionedly religious. He tried to explain his action. "After all," he continued, "why should I sell them? If I needed clothes, I shouldn't hesitate a second. But this way—suppose my old father, when he sees me again, should ask me: 'Where are your t'fillin?' What should I be able to say to him if I didn't have them?"

At the supper table some one had remarked that if you wear t'fillin you are protected from harm. "If that's the case," a second man mused, "we ought to wear them when we are at work in the swamps."

For there was some danger connected with their work of drainage. One of the men told me that they sometimes worked as far as three metres below the surface of the ground; and

I myself know that they often work in water up to their waists.

The workers at this particular place were paid so much per cubic metre of dirt that they removed. They were at present earning very little, for the soil was dry and hard at this time of the year.

After supper I went over to see the Americans, who had returned. They were young boys—not more than nineteen or twenty, though they looked older.

The knowledge that we understood the same life and the same language loosened their tongues, and they soon poured out to me all that for want of an audience they had long had to store up in their hearts. They were New Yorkers. They had run away from home without even saying goodbye to their parents. “But,” said one of them, “in six months we’re going back, and we’ll say goodbye to them then. And after we’ve said goodbye, we’re going to go back to Palestine for good.”

They gave me their home addresses. “But,” they pleaded, “don’t tell our folks we’re work-

ing in swamps. Tell them that things couldn't be better with us."

"How do you find the life here," I asked, "after having been brought up in New York?"

"It's very, very hard," Sam, the younger one, replied. "At home I had everything my heart desired. I was brought up in luxury. Here there's none of that."

He had been brought up in the luxury of Orchard Street—which, let it be stated for the benefit of those who do not know New York, is proverbially one of the most wretched streets in the city!

He went on: "Take moving pictures, for instance. We haven't seen a picture since we left America, and you can't imagine how we miss them. That's one of the worst things."

There was a girl in the tent who was removing the supper dishes. Sam pointed to her. "That's the girl who's made it possible for me to bear my loneliness. But," with a sigh, "I've had an awful lot of trouble with her. I can't make her understand that she's not to go with any man but me. You'd be surprised how

modern and independent the girls here are. In New York I had a girl, and she didn't dare to look at anyone else."

"I think the women here in Palestine are wonderful," I said.

"They're not so wonderful as you think," he replied bitterly.

"Why? They're not moral?" I asked, astonished.

"Oh, they're moral all right. But they don't know what it is to be jealous. New York girls see movies, and you can bet that *they* know!"



## CHAPTER XXII

### MORE COLONIES

*May 10*

**T**HE next morning I started off for Kfar Saba, accompanied by a chalutz from Tel Aviv who told me that he had been a soldier in the Polish army. There are many chalutzim who have served in one or another of the armies of Europe. This man had been in the service when the Bolsheviki defeated the Poles so decisively a few years ago. "And it's lucky for me," he said, "that I'm such a good walker. The Russians were right at our heels, and they got all those who lagged behind. They chased us all day—and that day I walked a hundred kilometres."

After a long struggle over the sandy road we arrived at Kfar Saba, a straggly town of about fifteen houses set in a sandy field.

On our way to the store we were stopped by a chalutz of about twenty-three. He had a face

quiet and sweet. Noticing my camera, he begged me to take his picture. He had long wanted to be photographed together with his cows, but he had never before had the opportunity.

There was no refusing him. I assured him that I would take his picture after we had eaten, if the sun were still favorable. He then invited us to have coffee at his house.

As we walked along the chalutz told us about himself. He had come to Palestine two years before. With his accumulated savings he had recently been able to take to independent farming. He had leased a field of twenty dunams—the rent for which he paid by giving the owner one fourth of its produce—and purchased the necessary farming equipment. He had three cows and a calf. When he needed horses he hired them. His “house” consisted of a tent which was just the length and width of his cotbed. The entire outfit had cost him fifty pounds. He was, perforce, his own cook and housekeeper.

He derived his income from several sources.

Milk netted him about seventeen piastres a day. Then there was the produce of the field. He also hired out as a laborer when he had spare time on his hands.

After dinner I kept my promise and photographed our host. His cows were not at hand, but he insisted that his field, and especially that part of it which he was just at this time cultivating, should appear in the picture with him instead.

From Kfar Saba we continued on to Ain Chai, about three quarters of a mile away.

Ain Chai I found to be a more substantial and attractive colony than most of those I had been seeing lately. The houses were all built of firm, new wood, each according to the same sturdy plan. They lined either side of a street both straight and regular. The barns, also of the same model, with their walls of concrete and their roofs of red tiling augmented the impression of strength and permanence.

Next we were bound for Raanana. Several people had informed me that it was an American colony, and I half expected upon arriving

there to see the Stars and Stripes flying and hear people shouting to one another in English. But I was disappointed. In reality, although it was almost a mile long, the town had no more than sixteen houses in all. I entered one at random and, under the pretext of asking for water, I learned from the woman who lived there that there had indeed been some Americans living here, but that most of them had sold out and only a few remained.

And this was an "American colony."

I had been told that there would be a bus leaving for Tel Aviv at 1:45, so we hurried back to Magdiel. There the chalutz and I parted company. He remained in Magdiel, while I rode south to Tel Aviv.

I arrived in Tel Aviv at three-thirty. On Shechem Street I inquired whether there would be any buses going to Herzlea that afternoon. For in Herzlea lived the father of a friend of mine back home, and I wanted to deliver to him his son's regards.

But I discovered that buses go to Herzlea only on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday

mornings; and since it was now Sunday afternoon, I decided to remain in Tel Aviv for the day.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### JEWS ARE THEMSELVES IN PALESTINE

*May 11*

**T**HE next day I went to a grocery store much frequented, as I was told, by Herzleans, in the hope of getting more information about Herzlea. The shop was owned by a married couple, and I managed to enter into a conversation with the woman.

They had come from Russia six months before, having been brought over by a wealthy friend. He had intended to establish them on a farm which he owned nearby, but several of his relatives in that neighborhood had contracted malaria, and he had refused to let his friends endanger their lives by going to the same place. So with his assistance they had opened up this store instead.

In Russia, formerly, these people had been very rich. They had had a coal business in which they had employed two hundred men.

But the Bolsheviks confiscated everything, and overnight they became destitute. The husband, who had failed to obey Bolshevik instructions implicitly, might even have lost his life, had not his wife, on the day before the Bolsheviks had seized his property, providentially prevailed upon him to accompany her on a trip out of town.

Being petty shopowners was very, very hard for them. Of her husband it had already made an old man. It was so narrowing, so mean, she said. In order to make a living one had to watch every cent—and in Russia they had lived like princes.

A man entered the store behind me, and asked for a loaf of bread, in Yiddish. The woman whose husband had not so long ago employed two hundred men waited upon him. I heard the man ask: "Ist das frisch?" Attracted by the nasal twang with which he spoke, I turned around. Sure enough, it was an Arab who had spoken Yiddish.

I soon left Tel Aviv and rode by bus to the agricultural school of Mikveh Israel, which is

three miles to the southeast. I was now beginning my tour of lower Judæa.

I passed through three gateways and found myself on what might be called the Mikveh Israel campus. Directly in front of me, at the end of a walk, stood a square two-story building. This was flanked by two other structures, remarkable for their extreme length. Behind them were scattered six additional buildings. The entire settlement was surrounded by a large number of luxuriant trees.

One of the teachers, who had studied at Davis in California and spoke English, showed me the school from top to bottom. I saw vineyards and orange groves, tobacco fields and flower gardens, classrooms, synagogue, dining-room, kitchen, sleeping quarters, library, hospital, laboratory, incubator room, wine cellar, blacksmith shop, bakery, magazine and power house, soil room and poultry house. It was a town in itself.

My guide willingly answered the many questions I put to him. The school had been built fifty-four years ago in the first modern Jewish



settlement in Palestine. It was the property of the Alliance Israelite Universelle, a Jewish philanthropic society in France. For this reason French had once been the language of instruction here. But Hebrew, the language of the land, had finally won out, and French was then relegated to the position of a compulsory foreign language.

The school is open to boys of fourteen. The sons of Ica farmers obtain free tuition. Others, according to their means, pay from thirty to fifty pounds a year. This includes everything from food to tuition.

The present attendance is one hundred and fifty.

The students are instructed in all phases of theoretical and practical agriculture. The course extends over three years. During the first two years the time is divided evenly between both of these two divisions. Half the day may be spent, for instance, in the dairy, and the other half in the classroom. During the last year, however, the entire day is de-



STUDENTS OF THE AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL AT MINYEH ISRAEL



voted to practical work, while the classes are held at night.

The boys are shifted to a different kind of work every month, and so they finally come to know practical agriculture in all its various phases. This is the same as the system that is practiced in the kvutsoth.

Mikveh Israel is also open to chalutzim. There were about fifty of them at the school when I was there. Their course is one year long. They work during the day, and study at night. But they receive no degrees.

When I had completed my inspection of Mikveh Israel, I returned to dingy old Jaffa. There I boarded a bus bound for Rishon le-Zion. But I got off half mile before, at Nachlath Yehudah, an old settlement. I asked one of the passengers whether there was a hotel there. In answer he pointed to a thin, tired-looking man of about sixty who was likewise getting off here. "That's the proprietor," he told me.

I followed this man to his hotel, which was but a few steps off the road. We entered a

broad, long room which divided the house lengthwise into two parts, where I sat down at the table in the middle of the room. There my host soon joined me.

At first I had thought him at least sixty years old. But after seeing him at closer range and speaking to him for a while, I felt that I had accredited him with fifteen years more than his due. Hard work or a recent illness had made his face wan and drawn; and besides, he was worn out with the day he had just spent in the city. He hated the city, he confided. Whenever he went there he came back with a headache. It was so noisy, and the air was vile. He opened the door and pointed to the landscape beyond. "See how nice and quiet it is here," he enthused, "and the air is so fresh."

He was very talkative. Speaking of a brother in America, he said: "I could have gone there, too, twenty years ago, if I hadn't come to Palestine instead." But in spite of the struggle he had had and was still having here, he in no way regretted his decision.

"In America they have whistles," he went

on. "My brother writes me that when the whistle blows you have to get out of bed. Here we have no whistles. My clock is my whistle, and I set it to suit myself. I am my own master. If I want, I get up at two in the morning, and if I want, I get up at four." Four was his idea of a very late hour indeed.

Before going to bed I went out into the street, where I found children dancing about a huge bonfire. In Rishon le-Zion, a short distance away, I saw still other bonfires shooting up into the night—one so enormous that I thought some house must be ablaze.

"What in the world's the matter?" I asked the hotel-keeper, who had come out with me.

"This is the Eve of Lag B'omer, and it's the custom of the Jews in Erez Israel to kindle bonfires on this occasion. Here in their own land the Jews are neither ashamed nor afraid to show that they are Jews."

## CHAPTER XXIV

### LAG B'OMER

*May 12*

**I** SET out to explore the settlement. On the main street I met a number of English soldiers with rifles on their shoulders. They were returning from target practice on the white sand dune which rises above Nachlath Yehudah, for the settlement lies near the sea, though the water cannot be seen from there.

The proprietor of the hotel had told me that there was a girl's kvutzah here in Nachlath Yehudah. "And the girls wear pants," he had informed me, with a view to startling me. But he was disappointed, for I had long known that Palestinian girls wear knickers and bloomers just as do their American sisters. And their skirts are even shorter than those of our own girls. But in Palestine they dress thus, not

for the sake of style and exhibition, but for greater convenience in hard bodily labor.

I walked over to this kvutzah. I found it very similar to the one which I had visited in Shechunath Boruchov a few days previously.

I asked one of the girls in the garden if she would not let me photograph her. Much to my astonishment and disappointment, I was curtly and abruptly refused.

In another part of the garden I met three other girls. I hesitated to ask them also, for fear that they likewise would rebuff me. But having set my heart on obtaining pictures of these young women who represented a wonderful type of Jewish womanhood almost unknown to us in America, I loitered about in the hope of being able to snap them unawares. I made believe I was preparing to procure a view of the street.

One of the girls, puzzled by my strange and long drawn-out manoeuvres, finally asked me what I was doing. "Taking a picture of the



town," I answered — and added quickly, "Would you like me to take yours, too?"

To my delight she agreed enthusiastically. And she called her two companions over to be photographed with her. But first I had to promise that I would surely send them each a copy of the photo. "And if you don't send each of us copies," one of them threatened, "I swear I'll never again, in all my life, believe another man." And under this terrible threat I took the picture.

I returned to the hotel and took my knapsack, after which I went on to Rishon le-Zion, about a ten minutes' walk away. I found it to be a large town built about a very big square, the houses somewhat of the Petach Tikveh type—of a stucco somewhat the worse for age. The one remarkable thing that I noticed in the town was a huge structure—the famous wine manufactory of Rishon le-Zion. It is really immense—the largest building I have seen in Palestine.

Naturally, I was rather anxious to see this spectacular place at closer range. But when

I reached it I could not locate the entrance. And since I was really too tired to care very much or look very hard, I contented myself with going to sleep beneath a shady olive tree.

A half hour later, very much refreshed, I descended the hill to the Yemenite quarter, a truly picturesque place with its white and pink "doll houses."

Walking down the nearest street, I encountered a young girl and a woman. I asked them the way to Beer Jacob, and in this way entered into a conversation with them.

The girl, dark-skinned and handsome, told me that each house had only two dunams of land attached to it.

I remarked: "I don't see how you can support yourselves upon so little."

"We certainly can not," she replied bitterly. "In order to make a living our men have to go to Rishon le-Zion to work for others."

Further down the street I came upon a Yemenite in a garden. He was at work on a tobacco patch.

Nearby sat his wife, holding a child in her arms. She kissed and fondled it, and smiled and crooned over it as gently and as dotingly as do mothers in every land and region, of every race and color, all the world over.

A man as bent and withered as Job came limping up. He sat down beside me. In an almost unintelligible jargon of Hebrew and Arabic he asked me what I was doing here and whence I came. When I told him, he remarked, with a smile, that tourists from America have lots of money.

"What makes you think that?" I asked.

"Because they ride about in automobiles."

"But look, I am traveling on foot."

The man at work in the tobacco patch had been listening to our conversation. Now, fearing that I might be offended at having been taken for a rich man, he interrupted with: "Yes, there are rich tourists, and there are poor ones, too. The rich ride in automobiles, and the poor travel on foot."

I went on. Before I could reach the foot of the street a score or more of Yemenite school-

boys, jumping and shouting hilariously, came rushing out upon the street from between two houses. They bore down upon me like mad dervishes.

In spite of the fearful din, I managed to learn that these boys were from the Yemenite colony in Rechoboth. Since school was closed today because of Lag B'omer, they had gone on a hike with their teacher to Rishon le-Zion.

They were on their way home now. I decided to go with them.

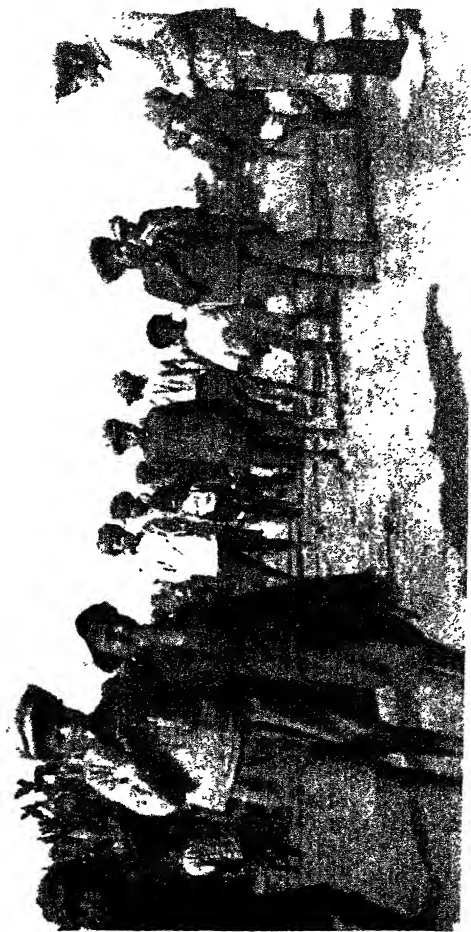
It took a while for them to get ready to start. In the interim a Yemenite woman approached me timidly, and asked me to photograph her. And when I told her that I could not possibly spare any of the very few films I had left, she replied that it would not take many—that she just wanted to be photographed from the waist up!

We finally left the colony, noisily cheered by the boys who lived there. It was a lively procession. I was speedily reminded that boys are boys the world over. A rotten olive flew—smack!—against the back of my neck. Caps

snatched from the heads of the unwary went sailing through the air. Those who did not have eyes in the rear of their heads went tumbling over the backs of their friends who had sneaked up from behind. Their queer-looking teacher was a true "good sport," despite his long beard and longer skirts. He made no attempt to check the boys, although, as a matter of fact, I doubt that it would have done him any good if he had objected. And he, too, took an olive on the back of his head smiling.

We followed a path which led to the south across a large stretch of sandy and almost completely barren hill country. In an hour we were at the station of Beer Jacob—a small, green hut. The train soon came along, and all of us got on. That is to say, all but the teacher. Either he was too dignified to run, or perhaps his long skirt hindered him. At any rate, he was still a hundred feet from the station when the train pulled out.

The boys got off at Rechoboth, which was the last stop of this train. But since I expected to visit Rechoboth the next day, I remained on



YEMEMITE SCHOOLCHILDREN FROM RECHOBOTH ON LAG B'OMER HIKE



board and rode back past Beer Jacob again to Ludd. There I took a carriage and some twenty minutes later I found myself, on the other side of a dry plain, in Ben Shemen. Meanwhile, despite the fact that neither of us understood the language of the other, my driver had successfully managed to raise the fare from eight piastres to ten.

Ben Shemen is composed of two distinct parts a quarter of a mile distant from each other: one on top of a hill, the other on the further side of the hollow which begins at the foot of the hill. The first is the moshava of Ben Shemen, the other the moshav.

The moshava in which I now was is, in reality, an agricultural experimental station. Like Sarona in Galilee, it is built like a fort—of stone, and enclosed on all sides.

I walked through the large gateway into the courtyard. There was a girl standing in one of the doorways whom I asked where I could find food and a place to sleep for the night. She directed me to the workman's kvutzah which she told me existed here in Ben Shemen.



## CHAPTER XXV

### ORANGE GROVES AND PROSPERITY

*May 13*

**I**N the morning I strolled over to the moshav below. Here was no longer the sand country; the fields were covered with a thick carpet of yellow grain. A short distance away began the gnarled and jagged foothills of the Mountains of Judæa, and to the west stretched the broad Plain of Judæa.

The moshav, likewise, is surrounded by a wall—but such a wall as would keep out cattle, not men. With its six twin houses, and a bright green barn for every house, it is quite an attractive place.

I walked over to one of the houses, in front of which there were several women at work. Before I could do more than greet them, one of them, noticing that I was a stranger, immediately asked: “Won’t you have something to eat?”

Then she inquired about living conditions in America.

"If one has work, one can live there very well," I answered.

"It is that way here, too," she smiled.

It was time now to return to Ludd, whence I intended to take the train back to Rechoboth.

I started off. It was fearfully hot. The sun beat down upon me, and before me stretched a seemingly endless plain, with never a tree in sight. Fortunately, though, when my knees were already beginning to wobble, an Arab boy came riding up on a donkey. To my surprise he spoke Hebrew. We struck a bargain. For four piastres he dismounted, while I took his place on the donkey's back.

He was a very intelligent fellow. He told me how he had learned Hebrew. His father as a boy had studied it in the Ben Shemen school, and he had taught it to his son simply by speaking it to him. He had also been about to teach him to write Hebrew, but, his eyes becoming infected, he had had to stop. The boy,

I could see, also had weak eyes. Indeed, eye diseases are the plague of the Orient.

When he learned that I was an American, the boy asked me how much money I had brought along from home. I preferred not to answer.

"But tell me," he insisted. "A hundred pounds, perhaps?"

"But that's a great deal of money, don't you think?"

"Yes, in Palestine. But not in America."

Our fame has traveled far.

We came to the station. The train soon came puffing up.

I was about to get on board, when some one seized my shoulder from behind and whirled me about. There stood my old Harvard roommate. He had left Jerusalem that morning, and after a seven months' stay in the Holy Land was now on his way back to America.

Fifteen minutes later I was leaving the train at Rechoboth. I must admit that my heart ached as, forlornly standing on the platform

of the station, I saw my friend being carried off on his way to Egypt and—home.

Above the station a road crosses the tracks at right angles. To the right lies Ness-Zionah, to the left, Rechoboth. I turned to the left.

Once more the road was fearful. Again there was that loose, heavy sand that I had encountered in Upper Judæa. But its color was red—the red of the sand in Petach Tikveh—and that meant that I should find beautiful orange groves here.

Rechoboth is a very lovely colony. There are a good many trees there, and they make a splendid background for the brightly contrasting and charming white houses that nestle cozily beneath them. Only the sprawling streets of sloppy red sand mar the beauty of this spot.

I deposited my baggage at the hotel. But before nightfall I still wished to visit Ness-Zionah, which was only about a mile and a half away. I therefore started off on a donkey. Till the railroad crossing the beast went nicely, because up to that point an Arab boy rode after

and whipped it. But there it slumped, and, not being in the least a good horseman, or, rather, a donkeyman, the best I could get out of it thereafter was a sort of staggering trot.

Ness-Zionah lies at the foot of a hill, at the top of which is the town park, led up to by a long staircase of concrete steps. In the park I found the unobstructed breezes which passed over the hill most refreshing, while the view below was delightful. At the foot of the hill began the dense and vigorous orange groves which are the backbone of the colony.

There were a few attractive new houses here. One of them, very large and but just completed, was extremely so, and I wanted to see the inside of it. The owner was kind enough to show me through. The interior matched the outside. The rooms were large and high. Cement floors and plaster walls kept the house cool in spite of the hot tropical sun outside. It was three stories high. The third, with gabled roof, consisted of two long rooms. These rooms, painted a dove-colored gray, unreachd by the glaring rays of the sun, but bathed in-

stead in a light soft and soothing, and overlooking the green stretches of Ness-Zionah's beautiful fruit groves below, were such rooms as poets might dream in.

Such houses are not typical of Palestine. But they do occur occasionally in the regions of the orange groves, the fruit of which spells wealth for their owners.

The owner told me that he had begun to build his house before the war. But the Turks and the English appropriated all the stones and building materials which had been gathered ready on the spot, and he had been obliged to postpone building for years. So that the completed job had cost him ten thousand dollars—just three times as much as it would have done before the war.

I remarked that ten thousand dollars was a much greater sum in Palestine than it was in America. To my surprise the colonist replied that it was less.

"If people in Palestine were to live on the same scale as people in America do," he explained, "the ten thousand dollars would pur-

chase far less here. For we live more cheaply here only because our tastes are simpler. And even if they weren't, articles of luxury would be too hard to obtain, anyway."

When I had first seen this man, I had remarked to myself that he had something of the American in his looks. To my surprise I soon found out that he really *had* been in America (for five years, during the McKinley-Roosevelt period). But it was probably a matter of chance that I had surmised as much; for, though I have observed, especially in the case of English Jews, that environment leaves its stamp upon us to a remarkable extent, yet I am not ready to believe that only five years of America twenty years ago still left its impress upon the face of the man before me.

It was already growing dark when I started back for Rechoboth.

Though the person who was now riding him had forgotten at what house in Rechoboth he had hired him, the donkey he was riding had not, and he took me straight up to his master's door.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### BROADWAY VIA DONKEY AND TAXI

*May 14*

**T**HERE were three colonies still before me: Ekron, Gederah, and Beer Tobiah.

The weather was now frightfully hot, so, feeling rather the worse for wear, I decided to travel by donkey, and hired the animal of the day before.

I called for him after breakfast. He was a thin beast, and somewhat smaller than the average of his kind. But there was none other to be obtained, and so, reflecting that these donkeys are known to be really much stronger than they look, I smothered my humitarian feelings and quickly mounted him.

They gave me saddle bags half-filled with provender, and a stout stick. I filled the remainder of the bags with my knapsack, my camera, and my sweatshirt, and giving the donkey a tap on the ribs, was on my way.



I passed the Yemenite quarters on the outskirts of Rechoboth. Then for a mile and a half both sides of the road were lined by fruit groves, fenced off from the road by rows of cactus trees six feet high and five feet wide. These, whose trunks below the huge, spiked leaves were at last seven inches thick and all intertwining, made a fence which might have stopped an army.

Ekron, to which I soon came, on the edge of a vast plain yellow with grain, and set against a background of deep green trees, was a very enticing sight from a distance. At closer range, however, it rapidly lost all semblance of beauty, for its old and decrepit long brick buildings made it look like a factory town.

The plain beyond Ekron is hemmed in to the north and west by a semi-circular chain of hills and low-lying mountains. Gederah, my next colony, lies diagonally opposite Ekron, but the road skirts the base of the chain instead of following a straight line, and so I was obliged to retrace my steps for quite some dis-

tance and travel to Gederah in a roundabout way.

Traveling was now easier, since the road was no longer uphill, and had, besides, lost its sandy character. But my donkey, although he had started briskly enough and behaved himself quite well till I had left Ekron, now began to balk, and merely dribbled along. A company of Arabs traveling behind me on camels and donkeys at a pace far from swift accordingly soon caught up with me, and for the next few hours I had company.

They were very friendly. I have many times been sorry that I do not know Arabic. A knowledge of it would have made my trip through Palestine twice as fascinating. But good nature and kindness being a tongue which all peoples have in common, we spoke in the language of smiles and good deeds. On the way, when they ate they offered me their bread, and when they drank, their water; and though the bread they ate was far from appetizing, and the water which they offered they offered in a rusty tin, yet their kindness had none the less

of the principle of brotherly love in it for all that.

Gederah, a settlement of one main street with one or two small by-ways, is exactly like any of thirty other of the older colonies. But there were also some fine new houses, as in Ness-Zionah.

When my donkey had rested and fed, I continued on toward Beer Tobiah, the last settlement on my itinerary. Outside Gederah the country again became hilly, climbing a long, gradual slope, and then descending a similar one. Then I crossed a second broad plain, ascended and descended still another hill, and finally found myself on the single street which composes Beer Tobiah.

All this sounds very simple, but it was far from that. The donkey stubbornly refused to do anything but shuffle along, and four weary hours elapsed before I finally reached Beer Tobiah, stiff, tired, and sore.

In front of the first house were gathered a small group of women and children talking. Not having eaten that morning, and feeling

hungry, I called out to them and asked where the shop was.

One of the women directed me. At the same time she asked what I wanted there. "Food," I replied. Thereupon the woman invited me to eat at her house, which was the one before which the group was assembled.

Nothing loth, I dismounted and entered. Meanwhile her son—a boy of thirteen—took care of my donkey, unsaddling, watering, and feeding it.

My hostess told me that her husband had gone to America about a year ago and was now working in Buffalo.

After supper—for which I was not allowed to pay—I asked where I could find lodging for the night. In answer, another of the women took me to her house and there arranged a couch for me.

Before going to bed we sat in the crude but homelike dining-room and talked. I asked what were the relations between the Jews and the Arabs here.

"Perfectly peaceful. I have been living in

Beer Tobiah twenty-seven years, and we've never had a bit of trouble. In fact, when an Arab's sick he comes to the Jewish doctor here. And if the Arabs were not friendly toward us," she concluded, "they could wipe us out in an hour." The absence of fortifications and the great distance from other Jewish colonies made this appear quite obvious.

"Do you like living here?"

"Oh, yes. Of course we lead a very quiet life, but it's by no means as dull as you might think. We have time to read, and, besides, the life here is very sociable and intimate. We find a great deal of joy in the company of each other and our children. And occasionally we even partake of the advantages which a city has to offer; once in a while we go to Tel Aviv. How do we get there? Well, first we go by wagon to Ashdod, which is an hour away, and there we take the train. And in Tel Aviv we stay a day or two and go to the opera, and enjoy many of the numerous other attractions that a great city of thirty thousand people has to offer."

The next morning I started back for Jerusalem, and two and a half weeks later I was riding up Broadway in a taxi.

*THE END*

















